Class _____

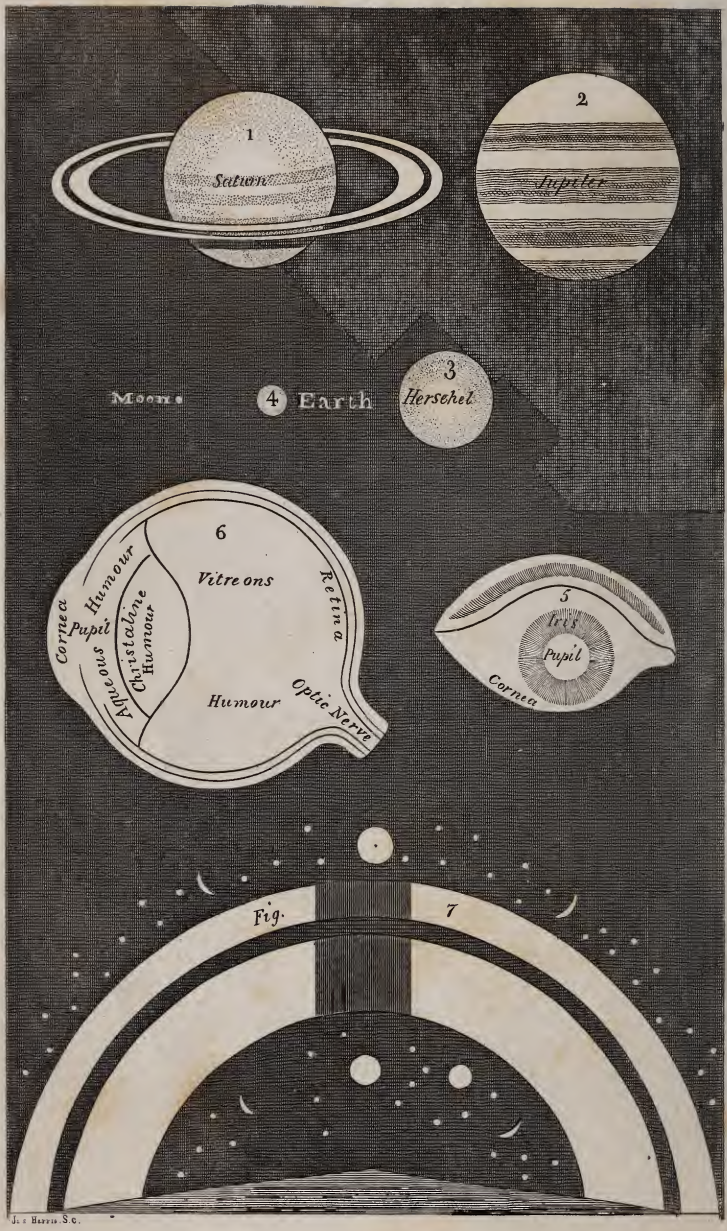
Book _____

PRESENTED BY

_____

Elizabeth Milne.

Warwick Jan 1837.



J. & H. Harris, Sc.

PUBLISHED, BY KEY & BIDDLE.

UNIFORM EDITION.

THE

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER;

OR,

THE CONNECTION

OF

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY WITH RELIGION.

BY THOMAS DICK, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF A VARIETY OF LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATIONS IN NICHOLSON'S PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, THE ANNALS OF PHILOSOPHY, ETC. ETC.

PHILADELPHIA:

KEY AND BIDDLE, 23 MINOR STREET.

1836.

BL240
.D5
1836

Gift
Kent Law Book Co.
Jan. 22, 1987

EXPLANATION OF THE ENGRAVING.

(*Fronting the Title.*)

The five figures on the upper part of the plate, marked 1, 2, 3, 4 &c. represent the planets Herschel, Saturn, Jupiter, the Earth, and Moon, in their relative sizes and proportions; together with telescopic views of the belts and rings of Saturn, and the belts of Jupiter. The two figures immediately below, marked 5 and 6, are intended to illustrate the description given of the eye, pp. 88—104. Fig. 5 represents a *front view* of the human eye. Fig. 6 represents a section of it, exhibiting the *three coats* and the *three humors* of which it is composed. Fig. 7 represents a rude view of the appearance which the rings and moons of Saturn will exhibit, in certain cases, as beheld from a point 20 or 30 degrees north from his equator—see pp. 187, 188. The shade on the upper part of the rings represents the shadow of the body of Saturn, as it appears upon the rings about midnight.

TO

DAVID BREWSTER, LL. D.

Fellow of the Royal Society of London; Secretary to the Royal Society of Edinburgh; Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Academy; Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences; Honorary Associate of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Lyons, &c. &c.

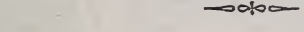
THIS VOLUME,

Intended to illustrate the connection of science and philosophy with religion, and with the moral improvement of mankind, is inscribed, as a testimony of respect for the acquisitions which science has derived from his philosophical discoveries and literary labours, by his most obedient, and humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE

TO THIS EDITION.



The following pages were written under the impression that the visible manifestations of the attributes of the Deity are too frequently overlooked by Christians in their views of the great objects of Religion, and in the worship they offer to the Father of their spirits; and are intended to show, that the Teachers of Religion, in imparting instruction either to the old or to the young, ought to embrace a wider range of illustration, in reference to Divine subjects, than that to which they are usually confined.

Throughout the whole of the discussions contained in this work, the Author has pursued his own train of thought; and, in so doing, he trusts that he has been enabled to render some of his illustrations more interesting to the young and untutored mind than if he had adhered rigidly to the sentiments of others, and to the technical language of science. The sketches of the different sciences are not mere extracts, or compilations, but are, for the most part, original composition—in which it has been his main object to embody as many facts as his limits would permit—in order to excite the inquiring mind to further investigations into the different departments of physical science.

It is presumed, that no Christian reader will for once imagine, that the views illustrated in this work are intended to be *substituted* in place of the peculiar revelations of the Bible. The object of the volume is to illustrate the harmony which subsists between the system of Nature and the system of Revelation; and to show, that the manifestations of God in the material universe ought to be blended with our views of the facts and doctrines recorded in the volume of Inspiration.

It is taken for granted, throughout the whole range of the following illustrations, that the Scriptures contain a

Revelation from Heaven; and, under a firm belief of this important truth, the Author has embellished his work with frequent quotations from the energetic and sublime language of this Sacred Book. It would, therefore, be unfair in any critic, who entertains doubts on this point, to find fault with such quotations, or with the allusions to Bible-phraseology which occur, unless they can be shown to be introduced without judgment or discrimination.

The Author has carefully revised every portion of the present edition, and introduced a variety of corrections and modifications. He has likewise introduced additional matter, to the extent of between 40 and 50 pages, and also several illustrative engravings. In its present form, the Author trusts, that, independently of the moral reflections it contains, it will be found to comprise popular descriptions of a greater number of scientific facts than is to be found in any other volume of the same size.

Various topics, originally intended to be illustrated, have been unavoidably omitted. Some of these are stated in the last paragraph of Chapter IV. the illustration of which, in combination with other kindred topics, would fill a volume of nearly the same size as the present. This subject (for which the author has abundance of materials) will be prosecuted in another volume, under the title of THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION; and will comprise, among many other subjects of discussion, illustrations of the moral relation of intelligent beings to their Creator, and to one another—the physical and rational grounds of those moral laws which the Deity has promulgated—the views which science affords of the incessant energies of Creating Power, and of the grand and multifarious objects over which Divine Providence presides—the relation of science to a future state, and of the aids which the discoveries of science afford, for enabling us to form a conception of the perpetual improvement of the celestial inhabitants in knowledge and felicity. These subjects will be illustrated by a variety of interesting details of facts, in relation to the system of nature, the history of nations, and the moral state of Christian and general society

CONTENTS.

Page.

INTRODUCTION, ... 17
Necessity of Revelation. Folly of discarding the Science of Nature from Religion. Beneficial Effects which flow from the study of the Works of God.

CHAP. I.

OF THE NATURAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY.

SECT. 1. On the RELATION of the NATURAL ATTRIBUTES of the DEITY to RELIGION, ... 25
The Christian Religion founded on the Natural Attributes of God. His Power as interesting a subject as his Mercy.—Illustrated in two instances. Evils which arise from imperfect conceptions of Divine Power. Defects in Religious Instructions on this subject. Sources of Illustration.

SECT. 2. Illustrations of the OMNIPOTENCE of the DEITY, . 32
The material world exhibits a more striking display of this Perfection than the supernatural facts recorded in Scripture. *Immense quantity of Matter in the universe.* Mode of acquiring the most comprehensive conception of the bulk of the Earth—its variety of scenery—its mass of solid matter. Magnitude of the bodies which compose the Solar System. Magnitude and number of the Stars. Procedure of the mind in acquiring the most impressive conceptions of such august objects. Reflections. *Rapid Motions of the Celestial Bodies.* How we acquire the ideas of relative velocities—weight of the Earth—immense physical forces—Grandeur of the motion of Saturn—immense number of bodies impelled through the heavens—Reflections. *Immense Spaces which surround the Heavenly Bodies*—Reflections. Popular illustration of the Motions of the Earth and Heavens. Extract from Dr. Ridgley, with remarks. Universe intended to *adumbrate* the Attributes of God, and to make a sublime impression on created beings. Similar trains of thought suggested in the Scriptures. *Moral Effects* of such contemplations. *Humility.* Folly of pride—low rank of man in the scale of being. *Reverence* and *Veneration*—Reason why mankind feel so little veneration of God—how it may be increased. The Deity unsearchable. *Hope* and *Confidence* in the prospect of futurity—Resurrection—Scenes of Eternity.

SECT. 3. On the WISDOM and INTELLIGENCE of the DEITY, . . 61
Wisdom defined—Displayed in the Structure of the Solar System. Distance of the Sun. Rotation of the Planets—Principal reason why such a motion exists. Wisdom displayed in other Systems. Minute displays of this attribute cannot be traced in the heavens. Wisdom, as displayed in the constitution of our globe—adjustment of its solid parts to the necessities of the beings which inhabit it. *Mountains*, their uses—exist in other

worlds. Diversity of color—argument for a plurality of worlds—general color which prevails in the scene of nature—*Water*, its use in the system of nature—its composition, evaporation—motion of the liquid element—its beneficial effects. The *Atmosphere*—its weight and pressure—its component parts—its various properties—necessary to animal life, flame, sound, twilight—wisdom displayed in its constitution. Expansion of water in the act of freezing.

VARIETY OF NATURE, ... 78

Vegetables—their number and variety. Animals—variety in their organization. Eyes of insects—their exquisite mechanism. Subterraneous Regions. Atmosphere. The Variety of Nature affords a faint idea of the *infinity* of the Creator. Illustrated in the number of animal parts and functions. Reflection. Variety the foundation of our judgments. Beauty and sublimity of Nature. Primeval state of our globe—other worlds.

Mechanism of Animated Beings, ... 88

STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN EYE—its coats, humors, muscles, orbit, and motions. Wisdom displayed in its construction. *Light*—its velocity, minuteness, colors, and adaptation to the eye. MANNER IN WHICH VISION IS PERFORMED—explained by a figure, and an experiment—illustrated by the view from Salisbury Crags. Multitude of rays which flow from every object—smallness of the image on the retina, illustrated by calculation—what proportion of the solar light falls on our globe—Reflections. Mechanism for viewing near and distant objects—contraction and dilatation of the pupil—distance at which we see distinctly. Summary view of adaptations in the structure of the eye. Eyes of superior intelligences. Visual organs of the inferior animals. *Mechanism of the Bones* illustrated—exemplified in the joints of the fingers, the wrist, and the movements of which the *head* is susceptible. Moral Reflections on the impropriety of overlooking the Divine Wisdom in the system of nature.

SECT. 4. On the GOODNESS OR BENEVOLENCE of the DEITY, . . 1[illegible]

Benevolence of God in relation to *Man*—considered as a depraved intelligence. *Mercy* displayed in the system of nature. Benevolence as displayed towards the lower animals. Extract from Dr. Paley. General Reflections.

CHAP. II.

A CURSORY VIEW OF SOME OF THE SCIENCES WHICH ARE RELATED TO RELIGION AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

Introduction. Extensive range of Theology. Bad effects of setting Religion in opposition to Science. Harmony of the operations of God in Nature and Revelation, ... 117

NATURAL HISTORY, ... 20

Its extensive range. Outline of its principal objects—on the surface and in the interior recesses of the earth—in the atmosphere—the vegetable, mineral, and animal kingdoms—and in the region of the heavens. Description of the Banian Tree. Reflections. Monkey Bread Tree. Splendor and felicity of insect life. Invisible worlds—infinity of the universe. *Religious tendency of this Science.* It affords a manifestation of the Deity, and expands our conceptions of his operations—ennobles the human mind. Recommended by the Sacred writers.

GEOGRAPHY, ... 134
Its object—Figure of the Earth—Proofs of its spherical form. Relation which the discovery of the figure of the earth bears to the plan of Providence. Magnitude and natural divisions of the earth. General features of its surface. *Mountains*—their general ranges, and the sublime scenes they exhibit. The *Ocean*—its extent, depth, bottom, and motions. *Rivers*—their number, size, and the quantity of water they pour into the ocean. How they are supplied—their use in the system of nature. *Artificial* division of the earth. Number and variety of its inhabitants. Number which has existed since the Creation—number at the resurrection, and the space they would occupy. Number which the earth would contain—strictures on Malthus. *Utility of the study of Geography to Religion*—to Directors of Missionary Societies—to Private Christians. Grandeur of its physical objects—utility of its moral facts.

GEOLOGY, ... 157
Its object and connection with religion—an interesting subject of inquiry. Materials which compose the crust of our globe. Various geological phenomena. Organic remains—Mammoth, Tapir, Elk, Megatherium, &c. Geological deductions not inconsistent with the Mosaic History—Genesis i. 1, 2, explained. Short duration of the earth in its *present form*. The Deluge, and its effects on the earth's strata. Marine shells, &c. Grand and terrific objects which this science exhibits—illustrate the sublime descriptions of the Deity recorded in the Scriptures.

ASTRONOMY, ... 168
Its sublime objects. Apparent motions of the Sun—of the Moon. Eclipses of the Sun and Moon. Apparent motion of the starry heavens. Stars and planets seen in the day-time, and with what powers of the telescope they may be distinguished. Apparent revolution of the celestial vault indicates Almighty power. Stars never shift their relative positions. Solar System. The Sun—his size and probable destination illustrated—his spots and atmosphere—different kind of rays emitted from his body—his distance illustrated. Mercury—his size, rotation, quantity of light and heat, &c. Proportions of caloric on the different planets. Venus—her size, phases, mountains, transits, and general phenomena. Original observations on, and mode by which her diurnal rotation may be determined. Earth—proofs of its annual and diurnal motions. The Moon—description of her majestic mountain scenery, luminous spots, celestial appearances, illuminating power, superficial contents, &c. *Mars*—his distance, atmosphere, luminous zone, &c. New Planets—Ceres, Pallas, Juno, and Vesta—their anomalies, singularities, and probable origin. Meteoric Stones. Jupiter—his bulk, rotation, belts, and the appearances of his moons. Saturn—his figure, belts, moons, and quantity of light. His Rings, their dimensions, motion, and phenomena—illustrated by a figure. Splendor of the firmament, as viewed from this planet (see the engraving.) Herschel—his distance, size, and quantity of light. Comets—their tails, velocity, orbits, size, and number. New Comet. Motion of the solar system in absolute space—its destination—plurality of worlds intimated in Scripture. The Fixed Stars—their distance illustrated—their arrangement, changes—moral reflections. Relation of Astronomy to Religion—moral effects which its objects have a tendency to produce—criminality of overlooking the works of God, &c.

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, ... 201
Its objects and different departments. Mechanics—subjects it embraces, and its importance to the improvement of mankind. Hydrostatics—its leading principles and uses, illustrated by figures. Pneumatics—its principles, and the experiments by which they are illustrated. Acoustics. Optics—leading facts and principles of this science. Burning-glasses, &c. Electricity—its nature, phenomena, effects, and agency in the system of nature. Galvanism—its singular effects on metals, &c. and on the animal system—various facts which it explains. Magnetism—its various phenomena and effects. Relation of Natural Philosophy to Religion—its inventions meliorate the condition of mankind—illustrated in the case of the electric fluid—it undermines the influence of superstition—unfolds the incessant agency of God—indifference to this subject unreasonable.

CHEMISTRY, ... 219
Its objects, and present dignified station. General forms of matter—simple and compound substances. Caloric—its sources and properties. Oxygen, its properties and combinations—nitrous oxide, its singular effects. Nitrogen, its effects on flame and animal life. Hydrogen, its properties and uses. Carbon, its nature, combinations, and antiseptic properties. Sulphur, its origin, combinations, and properties. Phosphorus, history of its discovery—how prepared—curious experiments with this substance—Phosphoric phenomena in the system of nature. Connection of this science with Religion—it displays the wisdom and benevolence of God, and the mode of his present and future operations—improves the condition of man—and carries forward our views to a more glorious and auspicious era.

ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY, ... 231
Their general object—human body, its different parts and divisions. Bones, their number, form, and positions. Muscles, their nature, use, and extraordinary strength. Heart and blood vessels, and the circulation of the blood. Respiration—curious structure of the lungs. Digestion. Perspiration. Sensation, and the system of nerves. Summary. Moral reflections—this branch of study teaches us our dependance on a Superior Power—and excites to gratitude.

HISTORY, ... 241
Its objects, advantages, and connection with Religion. Connection of the sciences and of the Divine dispensations with each other. Concluding remarks.

CHAP. III.

THE RELATION WHICH THE INVENTIONS OF ART BEAR TO THE OBJECTS OF RELIGION.

Art of Printing, its origin, and beneficial effects—Dr. Church's Improvements in, ... 246
Art of Navigation Mariner's Compass, its discovery and use, 249
The telescope, its invention, and the discoveries made by it—serves instead of a celestial vehicle—Magnifying powers of Dr. Herschel's Telescopes, ... 252
The Microscope, and the views it exhibits of the wisdom of God, 254
Steam Navigation, its utility in promoting the intercourse of mankind, and its relation to the objects of religion, . . . 256

Air Balloons, utility of, when arrived at perfection—proposed improvement in. History of their invention—Lunardi's ascent—the Parachute, ... 258
Acoustic tunnels. Experiments on the Conveyance of sound. M. Biot's remarkable experiment—Don Gautier's experiment and suggestion. Conclusions in reference to the extensive conveyance of sound, ... 262
Practical remarks—utility of the arts in relation to the Millennial era, ... 265

CHAP. IV.

SCRIPTURAL FACTS ILLUSTRATED FROM THE SYSTEM OF NATURE.

I. Science may frequently serve as a guide to the true interpretation of Scripture. Canon or rule for Scripture interpretation—illustrated, ... 271
II. The Depravity of man illustrated, from a consideration of the state of the interior strata of the earth. Volcanoes, and the terrible ravages they produce. Earthquakes, and their dreadful effects. Thunder-storms, tempests, and hurricanes. General Reflections on this subject, ... 274
III. The Resurrection illustrated. Transformations of Insects. Indestructibility of matter—conclusions from this fact, . . . 282
IV. General Conflagration. Concluding reflections. Topics omitted in this volume, ... 285

CHAP. V.

BENEFICIAL EFFECTS WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM CONNECTING SCIENCE WITH RELIGION.

I. The *variety* of topics would allure the attention of intelligent minds to religious subjects. Principle of novelty intended by the Creator to be gratified—illustrated in the variety which appears in the earth, the heavens, and the Volume of Revelation, . 289
II. Science enables us to take an *extensive survey of the empire of God*—illustrates many sublime passages of the Bible—qualifies us for complying with several Divine Injunctions—danger of selfishness and indifference in this respect. Our conceptions of God depend on our views of the extent of his dominions, . . 293
III. Science enlarges our views of the *operations of Providence*, in relation to the past and present scenes of the world. The economy of the inferior animals. The *physical* and *moral* economy of the celestial worlds, ... 305
IV. Science, blended with Religion, would produce a general expansion of mind, and liberality of views—in reference to the opinions and actions of men, and to the works and the ways of God, illustrated at large, ... 310
V. It would induce a spirit of *piety*, and profound *humility*. Sources of piety—illustrated by an example. Humility—illustrated by the examples of Mr. Boyle, of Sir Isaac Newton, and of superior intelligences. General conclusions, ... 317

APPENDIX.

No. I. Illustration of the rate of motion in the heavenly bodies, on the supposition that the earth is at rest, ... 321
No. II. Experimental illustrations of the pressure of the Atmosphere, ... 323
No. III. On the means by which it may probably be ascertained whether the Moon be a habitable world, ... 324
No. IV. Remarks on the late pretended discovery of a Lunar fortification, ... 326
No. V. On the ideas of Magnitude, Motion, and Duration, as expressed by numbers, ... 327
No. VI. On a Plurality of Worlds, ... 329
No. VII. On the first Inventor of Printing, ... 330
No. VIII. On Telescopes; with a brief notice of a *New Reflecting Telescope* constructed by the Author, ... 331
No. IX. On Steam Navigation, ... 334
No. X. Strictures on a certain sentiment respecting human redemption, ... 338
No. XI. Extract from Dr. Dwight, ... 343
No. XII. List of Popular Works on the different Sciences treated of in this Volume, with Occasional Remarks, ... 343

THE

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER.

INTRODUCTION.

On the subject of RELIGION, mankind have, in all ages, been prone to run into extremes. While some have been disposed to attach too much importance to the mere exertions of the human intellect, and to imagine that man, by the light of unassisted reason, is able to explore the path to true wisdom and happiness,—the greater part of religionists, on the other hand, have been disposed to treat scien tific knowledge, in its relation to religion, with a degree of indifference bordering upon contempt. Both these dispositions are equally foolish and preposterous. For he who exalts human reason, as the only sure guide to wisdom and felicity, forgets, that man, in his present state, is a *depraved* intelligence, and, consequently, liable to err; and that all those who have been left solely to its dictates, have uniformly failed in attaining these desirable objects. During a period of more than 5,800 years, the greater part of the human race have been left solely to the guidance of their rational powers, in order to grope their way to the Temple of Knowledge, and the Portals of Immortality; but what has been the result of all their anxious researches? Instead of acquiring correct notions of the Great Author of their existence, and of the nature of that homage which is due to his perfections, "they have become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts have been darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they have become fools; and have changed the glory of the Incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Instead of acquiring correct views of the principles of moral action, and conducting themselves according to the eternal rules of rectitude, they have displayed the operation of the most diabolical passions, indulged in continual warfare, and desolated the

earth with rapine and horrid carnage; so that the history of the world presents to our view, little more than a series of revolting details of the depravity of our species, and of the wrongs which one tribe of human beings has wilfully inflicted upon another.

This has been the case, not only among a few uncultivated hordes on the coasts of Africa, in the plains of Tartary, and the wilds of America, but even among those nations which stood highest in the ranks of civilization, and of science.—The ancient Greeks and Romans, who boasted of their attainments in philosophy, and their progress in the arts, entertained the most foolish, contradictory, and unworthy notions of the Object of Divine worship, of the requirements of religion, and of the eternal destiny of man. They adored a host of divinities characterized by impiety, fraud, injustice, falsehood, lewdness, treachery, revenge, murder, and every other vice which can debase the human mind, instead of offering a tribute of rational homage to that Supreme Intelligence who made, and who governs the universe. Even their priests and philosophers indulged in the most degrading and abominable practices, and entertained the most irrational notions in regard to the origin of the universe, and the moral government of the world. Most of them denied a future state of retribution, and all of them had their doubts respecting the reality of an immortal existence: and as to the doctrine of a resurrection from the dead, they never dreamed of such an event, and scouted the idea, when proposed to them, as the climax of absurdity. The glory to which their princes and generals aspired, was, to spread death and destruction among their fellow-men—to carry fire and sword, terror and dismay, and all the engines of destruction through surrounding nations—to fill their fields with heaps of slain—to plunder the survivors of every earthly comfort, and to drag captive kings at their chariot wheels—that they might enjoy the splendor and the honours of a triumph. What has been now stated, with regard to the most enlightened nations of antiquity, will equally apply to the present inhabitants of China, of Hindostan, of the Japanese Islands, of the Birman Empire, and of every other civilized nation on which the light of revelation has never shone—with this additional consideration, That they have enjoyed an additional period of 1800 years for making further investigations,

and are, at this moment, as far from the object of their pursuit as when they first commenced their researches; and not only so, but some of these nations, in modern times, have mingled with their abominable superstitions and idolatries, many absurdities and horrid cruelties, which were altogether unknown among the Greek and Roman population.

Such are the melancholy results to which men have been led, when left to the guidance of unassisted reason, in the most interesting and important of all investigations. They have wandered in the mazes of error and delusion; and their researches, instead of directing and expanding our religious views, have tended only to bewilder the human mind, and to throw a deeper shade of intellectual gloom over our apostate world. After a period of six thousand years has been spent in anxious inquiries after the path to true knowledge and happiness—Ignorance, Superstition, Idolatry, Vice and Misery, still continue to sway their sceptre over the great majority of the human race; and, if we be allowed to reason from the past to the future, we may rest assured, that while mankind are destitute of a Guide superior to the glimmerings of depraved reason, they would be no nearer the object of their pursuit, after the lapse of *sixty thousand years*, than at the present moment. It is only in connection with the discoveries of Revelation that we can expect, that the efforts of human reason and activity will be successful in abolishing the reign of Ignorance and degrading Superstition—in illuminating the benighted tribes of the Pagan World—and in causing "Righteousness, and Order, and Peace, to spring forth before all the nations." Though the Christian Religion has never yet been fully understood and recognised, in all its aspects and bearings, nor its requirements been cordially complied with, by the great body of those who profess to believe in its Divine origin, yet it is only in those nations who have acknowledged its authority, and in some measure, submitted to its dictates, that any thing approximating to just conceptions of the Supreme Intelligence, and of his moral government, is found to prevail.

But, on the other hand, though the light of nature is of itself a feeble and insufficient guide to direct us in our views of the Supreme Intelligence, and of our eternal destination, yet it is a most dangerous and delusive error to

imagine, that Reason, and the study of the material world, ought to be discarded from the science of religion. The man who would discard the efforts of the human intellect, and the science of Nature from Religion, forgets—that He who is the Author of human redemption, is also the Creator and Governor of the whole system of the material universe—that it is one end of that moral renovation which the Gospel effects, to qualify us for contemplating aright the displays of Divine Perfection which the works of creation exhibit—that the visible works of God are the principal medium by which he displays the attributes of his nature to intelligent beings—that the study and contemplation of these works employ the faculties of intelligences of a superior order*—that man, had he remained in primeval innocence, would have been chiefly employed in such contemplations—that it is one main design of Divine Revelation to illustrate the operations of Providence, and the agency of God in the formation and preservation of all things—and that the Scriptures are full of sublime descriptions of the visible creation, and of interesting references to the various objects which adorn the scenery of Nature. Without the cultivation of our reasoning powers, and an investigation of the laws and economy of Nature, we could not appreciate many of the excellent characters, the interesting aspects, and the sublime references of revealed religion: we should lose the full evidence of those arguments by which the existence of God and his attributes of Wisdom and Omnipotence are most powerfully demonstrated: we should remain destitute of those sublime conceptions of the perfections and agency of Jehovah which the grandeur and immensity of his works are calculated to inspire: we should never perceive, in its full force, the evidence of those proofs on which the Divine authority of Revelation is founded: we could not give a rational interpretation of the spirit and meaning of many parts of the Sacred Oracles; nor could we comply with those positive commands of God which enjoin us to contemplate the wonders of his power, to "meditate on all his works, and to talk of all his doings."

Notwithstanding these and many other considerations, which show the folly of overlooking the visible manifestations of Deity in the exercises of Religion, it has long been

* Rev. iv. 11, xv. 3, &c.

the practice of certain theologians to depreciate the wonderful works of Jehovah, and to attempt to throw them into the shade, as if they were unworthy of our serious contemplation. In their view, to be a bad philosopher is the surest way to become a good Christian, and, to expand the views of the human mind, is to endanger Christianity, and to render the design of religion abortive. They seem to consider it as a most noble triumph to the Christian cause, to degrade the material world, and to trample under foot, not only the earth, but the visible heavens, as an old, shattered, and corrupted fabric, which no longer demands our study or admiration. Their expressions, in a variety of instances, would lead us almost to conclude, that they considered the economy of Nature as set in opposition to the economy of Redemption, and that it is not the same God that contrived the system of Nature, who is also the "Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."

It is, unquestionably, both foolish and impious, to overlook or to undervalue any of the modes by which the Divine Being has been pleased to make known his nature and perfections to mankind. Since he has given a display of his "Eternal Power and Godhead" in the grand theatre of nature, which forms the subject of scientific investigation, it was surely never intended, and would ill comport with reverence for its adorable Author, that such magnificent displays of his Power, Wisdom, and Beneficence, as the material universe exhibits, should be treated, by his intelligent offspring, with indifference or neglect. It becomes us to contemplate, with adoring gratitude, every ray of our Creator's glory, whether as emanating from the light of Revelation, or as reflected from the scenery of nature around us, or as descending from those regions where stars unnumbered shine, and planets and comets run their solemn rounds. Instead of contrasting the one department of knowledge with the other, with a view of depreciating the science of nature, our duty is, to derive from both as much information and instruction as they are calculated to afford; to mark the harmony of the revelations they respectively unfold; and to use the revelations of nature for the purpose of confirming, and amplifying, and carrying forward our views of the revelation contained in the Sacred Scriptures.

With regard to the revelation derived from the Sacred Records, it has been imagined by some, that it has little or

no reference to the operations of the material system, and that, therefore, the study of the visible works of God can be of little importance in promoting religious knowledge and holy affections. In the sequel of this volume, I shall endeavor to show, that this sentiment is extremely fallacious, and destitute of a foundation. But, in the mean time, although it were taken for granted, it would form no argument against the combination of science with religion. For it ought to be carefully remarked, that Divine Revelation is chiefly intended to instruct us in the knowledge of those truths which interest us as subjects of the *moral administration* of the Governor of the world,—or, in other words, as apostate creatures, and as moral agents. Its grand object is to develope the openings and bearings of the plan of Divine Mercy; to counteract those evil propensities and passions which sin has introduced; to inculcate those holy principles and moral laws which tend to unite mankind in harmony and love; and to produce those amiable tempers and dispositions of mind, which alone can fit us for enjoying happiness either in this world, or in the world to come. For this reason, doubtless, it is, that the *moral* attributes of Deity are brought more prominently into view in the Sacred Volume, than his *natural* perfections; and that those special arrangements of his Providence, which regard the *moral* renovation of our species, are particularly detailed; while the immense extent of his universal kingdom, the existence of other worlds, and their moral economy, are but slightly hinted at, or veiled in obscurity. Of such a Revelation we stood in need; and had it chiefly embraced subjects of a very different nature, it would have failed in supplying the remedies requisite for correcting the disorders which sin has introduced among mankind.—But, surely, it was never intended, even in a religious point of view, that the powers of the human mind, in their contemplations and researches, should be bounded by the range of subjects comprised in that revelation which is purely, or chiefly of a *moral* nature; since the Almighty has exhibited so magnificent a spectacle in the universe around us, and endowed us with faculties adequate to the survey of a considerable portion of its structure, and capable of deducing from it the most noble and sublime results. To walk in the midst of this "wide extended theatre," and to overlook, or to gaze with indifference on those striking marks of Divine Om-

nipotence and skill, which every where appear, is to overlook the Creator himself, and to contemn the most illustrious displays he has given of his eternal power and glory. That man's religious devotions are much to be suspected, whatever show of piety he may affect, who derives no assistance, in attempting to form some adequate conceptions of the object of his worship, from the sublime discoveries of astronomical science; from those myriads of suns and systems which form but a small portion of the Creator's immense empire!* The professing Christian, whose devotional exercises are not invigorated, and whose conceptions of Deity are not expanded by a contemplation of the magnitude and variety of his works, may be considered as equally a stranger to the more elevated strains of piety, and to the noble emotions excited by a perception of the beautiful and the sublime.

"The works of the Lord," says an inspired writer, "are *great*, and are sought out by all those who have pleasure therein." They all bear the stamp of Infinite Perfection, and serve as so many sensible mediums to exalt and expand our conceptions of him, whose invisible glories they represent and adumbrate. When contemplated in connection with the prospects opened by Divine Revelation, they tend to excite the most ardent desires after that state of enlarged vision, where the plans and operations of Deity will be more clearly unfolded—and to prepare us for bearing a part in the immortal hymn of the church triumphant: —"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints." The most illustrious characters that have adorned our race in all ages, have been struck with the beauty and magnificence of the visible creation, and have devoted a certain portion of their time and attention in investigating its admirable economy and arrangement: and there can be no question, that a portion of our thoughts devoted to the study of the wondrous works of the Most High, must ultimately

* As some readers seem to have mistaken the Author's meaning, in this and similar passages, it may be proper to state, that his meaning is not—that a knowledge of natural science is *essential* to genuine piety; but, that the person *who has an opportunity of making himself acquainted with the science of nature* and of contemplating the wonders of the heavens in their true light, and who does not find his views of the Creator expanded, and his religious emotions elevated by such studies, has reason to call in question the nature and the sincerity of his devotional feelings.

be conducive to the improvement of our intellectual powers, to our advancement in the Christian life, and to our preparation for the exalted employments of the eternal world.

In fine, since the researches of modern times have greatly enlarged our views of the System of Universal Nature, and of the vast extent to which the operations of the Creator are carried on in the distant regions of space,—since the late discoveries of Naturalists and Experimental Philosophers, with respect to the constitution of the atmosphere, water, light, heat, the gases, the electric, galvanic, and magnetic fluids, and the economy and instincts of animated beings, have opened to our view a bright display of Divine Wisdom, in the contrivance and arrangement of the different parts of our terrestrial habitation,—since improvements in the useful arts have kept pace with the progress of science, and have been applied to many beneficial purposes, which have ultimately a bearing on the interests and the progress of religion—since a general desire to propagate the truths of Christianity in Heathen lands now animates the mass of the religious world—since the nations of both Continents are now aroused to burst asunder the shackles of despotism, and to inquire after rational liberty and mental improvement,—and since all these discoveries, inventions, and movements, and the energies of the human mind, from which they spring, are under the direction and control of that Omnipotent Being who made, and who governs the world—they ought to be considered as parts of those Providential arrangements, in the progress of which He will ultimately accomplish the illumination of our benighted race, and make the cause of righteousness and truth to triumph among all nations. And, therefore, the enlightened Christian ought thankfully to appreciate every exhibition, and every discovery by which his conceptions of the attributes of God, and of the grandeur of his works, may be directed and enlarged, in order that he may be qualified to "speak of the honor of his majesty, and talk of his power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom."

CHAPTER I.

OF THE NATURAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY, WITH PARTICULAR ILLUSTRATIONS OF HIS OMNIPOTENCE AND WISDOM.

SECTION I.

On the Relation of the Natural Attributes of DEITY *to* RELIGION.

A FIRM conviction of the existence of God, and a competent knowledge of his natural perfections, lie at the foundation of all religion, both natural and revealed. In proportion as our views of the perfections of Deity are limited and obscure, in a similar proportion will be our conceptions of all the relations in which he stands to his creatures, of every part of his providential procedure, and of all the doctrines and requirements of revealed religion.

By the natural or essential attributes of God, we understand such perfections as the following :—His Eternity, Omnipresence, Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Wisdom, Omnipotence, and Boundless Beneficence. These are the characters and attributes of Deity, which, we must suppose, form the chief subjects of contemplation to angels, and to all other pure intelligences—and, in investigating the displays of which, the sons of Adam would have been chiefly employed, had they continued in primeval innocence. These attributes form the ground work of all those gracious relations in which the God of salvation stands to his redeemed people in the economy of redemption—they lie at the foundation of the whole Christian superstructure—and were they not recognized as the corner stones of that sacred edifice, the whole system of the Scripture Revelation would remain a baseless fabric. The full display of these perfections will be exhibited in the future world—the contemplation of this display will form one

of the sublime employments "of the saints in light"—and to prepare us for engaging in such noble exercises, is one of the chief designs of the salvation proclaimed in the Gospel.

The Christian Revelation ought not to be considered as superseding the Religion of Nature, but as carrying it forward to perfection. It introduces the Deity to us under *new* relations, corresponding to the degraded state into which we have fallen. It is superadded to our natural relations to God, and takes it for granted, that these natural relations must for ever subsist. It is true, indeed, that the essential attributes of God, and the principles of Natural Religion, cannot be fully discovered without the light of Revelation, as appears from the past experience of mankind in every generation; but it is equally true, that, when discovered by the aid of this celestial light, they are of the utmost importance in the Christian system, and are as essentially connected with it, as the foundation of a building is with the superstructure. Many professed Christians, however, seem to think, and to act, as if the Christian Revelation had annulled the natural relations which subsist between man and the Deity; and hence the zealous outcry against every discussion from the pulpit, that has not a *direct* relation to what are termed the doctrines of grace. But nothing, surely, can be more absurd than to carry out such a principle to all its legitimate consequences. Can God ever cease to be Omnipotent, or can man ever cease to be dependent for existence on his infinite power? Can the Divine Being ever cease to be Omnipresent and Omniscient, or can man ever cease to be the object of his knowledge and superintendence? Can Infinite Wisdom ever be detached from the Almighty, or can man ever be in a situation where he will not experience the effects of his wise arrangements? Can Goodness ever fail of being an attribute of Jehovah, or can any sentient or intelligent beings exist that do not experience the effects of his bounty? In short, can the relation of *Creature* and of *Creator* ever cease between the human race, in whatever moral or physical situation they may be placed, and that Almighty Being, "who giveth to all, life and breath, and all things?" If none of these things can possibly happen, then the relations to which we refer must be eternal and unchangeable, and must form the basis of all the other relations in which we can possibly stand to the Divine Being, either as apostate or as redeemed creatures; and, therefore, they ought to be exhibited as subjects for our frequent and serious contemplation, as religious and moral agents. But, unless we make such topics a distinct subject of attention, and en-

deavour to acquire a clear and comprehensive conception of our natural relations to God, we can never form a clear conception of those new and interesting relations into which we have been brought by the mediation of Jesus Christ.

If man had continued in his primitive state of integrity, he would have been for ever exercised in tracing the Power, the Beneficence, and other attributes of Deity, in the visible creation alone. Now that his fallen state has rendered additional revelations necessary, in order to secure his happiness,—is he completely to throw aside those contemplations and exercises which constituted his chief employment, while he remained a pure moral intelligence? Surely not. One great end of his moral renovation, by means of the Gospel, must be, to enable him *to resume his primitive exercises*, and to qualify him for more enlarged views and contemplations of a similar nature, in that future world, where the physical and moral impediments which now obstruct his progress will be completely removed.

It appears highly unreasonable, and indicates a selfish disposition of mind, to magnify one class of the Divine attributes at the expense of another; to extol, for example, the mercy of God, and neglect to celebrate his Power and Wisdom—those glorious perfections, the display of which, at the formation of our globe, excited the rapture and admiration of angels, and of innocent man. All the attributes of God are *equal*, because all of them are *infinite;* and, therefore, to talk of *darling* attributes in the Divine Nature, as some have done, is inconsistent with reason, unwarranted by Scripture, and tends to exhibit a distorted view of the Divine character. The Divine mercy ought to be celebrated with rapture by every individual of our fallen race; but with no less rapture should we extol the Divine Omnipotence; for the designs of mercy cannot be accomplished without the intervention of Infinite Power. All that we hope for, in consequence of the promises of God, and of the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ, must be founded on the conception we form of the operations of Omnipotence.—An example or two may not be unnecessary for illustrating this position.

We are warranted, by the sacred oracles, to entertain the hope, that these mortal bodies of ours, after they have mouldered in the dust, been dissolved into their primary elementary parts, and become the prey of devouring reptiles, during a lapse of generations or of centuries,—shall spring forth from the tomb to new life and beauty, and be arrayed in more glorious forms than they now wear; yea, that all the inhabit-

ants of our globe, from Adam to the end of time, though the bodies of thousands of them have been devoured by cannibals, have become the food of fishes and of beasts of prey, and have been burnt to cinders, and their ashes scattered by the winds, over the different regions of sea and land,—shall be reanimated by the voice of the Son of God, and shall appear, each in his proper person and identical body, before God, the Judge of all. Now, the firmness of our hope of so astonishing an event, which seems to contradict all experience, and appears involved in such a mass of difficulties and apparent contradictions, must be in proportion to the sentiments we entertain of the Divine Intelligence, Wisdom, and Omnipotence. And where are we to find the most striking visible displays of these perfections, except in the actual operations of the Creator, within the range of our view in the material world?

Again, we are informed, in the same Divine records, that, at some future period, the earth on which we now dwell shall be wrapt up in devouring flames, and its present form and constitution for ever destroyed; and its redeemed inhabitants, after being released from the grave, shall be transported to a more glorious region; and that "new heavens and a new earth shall appear, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The divine mercy having given to the faithful the promise of these astonishing revolutions, and most magnificent events, our hopes of their being fully realized must rest on the infinite wisdom and omnipotence of Jehovah; and, consequently, if our views of these perfections be limited and obscure, our nope, in relation to our future destiny, will be proportionably feeble and languid; and will scarcely perform its office "as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast." It is not merely by telling a person that God is All-wise, and All-powerful, that a full conviction of the accomplishment of such grand events will be produced. He must be made to see with his own eyes what the Almighty *has already done*, and what he is now doing in all the regions of universal nature which lie open to our inspection; and this cannot be effected without directing his contemplations to those displays of intelligence and power which are exhibited in the structure, the economy, and the revolutions of the material world.

If the propriety of these sentiments be admitted, it will follow that the more we are accustomed to contemplate the wonders of Divine intelligence and power, in the objects with which we are surrounded, the more deeply shall we be impressed with a conviction, and a confident hope, that all the purposes

of divine mercy will ultimately be accomplished in our eternal felicity. It will also follow, that, in proportion as the mind acquires a clear, an extensive, and a reverential view of the essential attributes of the Deity, and of those truths in connection with them, which are objects of contemplation common to all holy beings, in a similar proportion will it be impressed, and its attention arrested, by every other divine subject connected with them. And it is, doubtless, owing to the want of such clear and impressive conceptions of the essential character of Jehovah, and of the first truths of religion, that the bulk of mankind are so little impressed and influenced by the leading doctrines and duties connected with the plan of the Gospel salvation, and that they entertain so many vague and untenable notions respecting the character and the objects of a superintending Providence. How often, for example, have we witnessed expressions of the foolish and limited notions which are frequently entertained respecting the operations of Omnipotence? When it has been asserted that the earth with all its load of continents and oceans, is in rapid motion through the voids of space—that the sun is ten hundred thousand times larger than the terraqueous globe—and that millions of such globes are dispersed throughout the immensity of nature—some who have viewed themselves as enlightened Christians, have exclaimed at the impossibility of such facts, as if they were beyond the limits of Divine Power, and as if such representations were intended to turn away the mind from God and religion; while, at the same time, they have yielded a firm assent to all the vulgar notions respecting omens, apparitions, and hobgoblins, and to the supposed extraordinary powers of the professors of divination and witchcraft. How can such persons assent, with intelligence and rational conviction, to the dictates of Revelation respecting the energies of Omnipotence which will be exerted at "the consummation of all things," and in those arrangements which are to succeed the dissolution of our sublunary system? A firm belief in the Almighty Power and unsearchable wisdom of God, as displayed in the constitution and movements of the material world, is of the utmost importance, to confirm our faith, and enliven our hopes, of such grand and interesting events.

Notwithstanding the considerations now stated, which plainly evince the connection of the natural perfections of God with the objects of the Christian Revelation, it appears somewhat strange, that, when certain religious instructors happen to come in contact with this topic, they seem as if they were

beginning to tread upon forbidden ground; and, as if it were unsuitable to their office as Christian teachers, to bring forward the stupendous works of the Almighty to illustrate his nature and attributes. Instead of expatiating on the numerous sources of illustration of which the subject admits, till the minds of the hearers are thoroughly affected with a view of the essential glory of Jehovah—they despatch the subject with two or three vague propositions, which, though logically true, make no impression upon the heart; as if they believed that such contemplations were suited only to carnal men, and mere philosophers; and as if they were afraid, lest the sanctity of the pulpit should be polluted by particular descriptions of those operations of the Deity which are perceived through the medium of the corporeal senses. We do not mean to insinuate, that the essential attributes of God, and the illustrations of them derived from the material world, should form the sole, or the chief topics of discussion, in the business of religious instruction—but, if the Scriptures frequently direct our attention to these subjects—if they lie at the foundation of all accurate and extensive views of the Christian Revelation—if they be the chief subjects of contemplation to angels, and all other pure intelligences, in every region of the universe—and if they have a tendency to expand the minds of professed Christians, to correct their vague and erroneous conceptions, and to promote their conformity to the moral character of God—we cannot find out the shadow of a reason, why such topics should be almost, if not altogether, overlooked, in the writings and the discourses of those who profess to instruct mankind in the knowledge of God, and the duties of his worship.

We are informed by our Saviour himself, that "this is life eternal, to know thee the living and true God," as well as "Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." The knowledge of God, in the sense here intended, must include in it the knowledge of the natural and essential attributes of the Deity, or those properties of his nature by which he is distinguished from all "the idols of the nations." Such are, his Self-existence, his All-perfect Knowledge, his Omnipresence, his Infinite Wisdom, his Boundless Goodness, and Almighty Power—attributes, which, as we have just now seen, lie at the foundation of all the other characters and relations of Deity revealed in the Scriptures. The acquisition of just and comprehensive conceptions of these perfections, must, therefore, lie at the foundation of all profound veneration of the Divine Being, and of all that is valuable in religion. Destitute of such concep-

tions, we can neither feel that habitual *humility*, and that *reverence* of the majesty of Jehovah which his essential glory is calculated to inspire, nor pay him that tribute of adoration and gratitude which is due to his name. Devoid of such views, we cannot exercise that cordial acquiescence in the plan of his redemption, in the arrangements of his providence, and in the requirements of his law, which the Scriptures enjoin. Yet, how often do we find persons who pretend to speculate about the mysteries of the Gospel, displaying,—by their flippancy of speech respecting the eternal councils of the Majesty of Heaven—by their dogmatical assertions respecting the divine character, and the dispensations of providence—and by their pertinacious opinions respecting the laws by which God *must* regulate his own actions—that they have never felt impressive emotions of the grandeur of that Being, whose "operations are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out?" Though they do not call in question his immensity and power, his wisdom and goodness, as so many abstract properties of his nature, yet, the unbecoming familiarity with which they approach this august Being, and talk about him, shows that they have never associated in their minds, the stupendous displays which have been given of these perfections, in the works of his hands; and that their religion (if it may be so called) consists merely in a farrago of abstract opinions, or in an empty name.

If, then, it be admitted, that it is essentially requisite, as the foundation of religion, to have the mind deeply impressed with a clear and comprehensive view of the natural perfections of the Deity, it will follow, that the ministers of religion, and all others whose province it is to communicate religious instruction, ought frequently to dwell, with particularity, on those proofs and illustrations which tend to convey the most definite and impressive conceptions of the glory of that Being whom we profess to adore. But from what sources are such illustrations to be derived? Is it from abstract reasonings and metaphysical distinctions and definitions, or from a survey of those objects and movements which lie open to the inspection of every observer? There can be no difficulty in coming to a decision on this point. We might affirm, with the schoolmen, that "God is a Being whose centre is every where, and his circumference no where;" that "he comprehends infinite duration in every moment;" and that "infinite space may be considered as the *sensorium* of the Godhead;" but such fanciful illustrations, when strictly analyzed, will be found to consist merely of *words* without *ideas*. We might

also affirm with truth, that God is a Being of infinite perfection, glory and blessedness—that he is without all bounds or limits, either actual or possible—that he is possessed of power sufficient to perform all things which do not imply a contradiction—that he is independent and self-sufficient—that his wisdom is unerring, and that he infinitely exceeds all other beings. But these, and other expressions of a similar kind, are *mere technical terms*, which convey no adequate, nor even tolerable notion of what they import. Beings, constituted like man, whose rational spirits are connected with an organical structure, and who derive all their knowledge through the medium of corporeal organs, can derive their clearest and most affecting notions of the Divinity, chiefly through the same medium, namely, by contemplating the *effects* of his perfections, as displayed through the ample range of the visible creation. And, to this source of illustration, the inspired writers uniformly direct our views—"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold! who hath created these orbs? who bringeth forth their host by number, and calleth them all by their names? The everlasting God, the Lord, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power."—"He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom; he hath stretched out the heavens by his understanding."—These writers do not perplex our minds by a multitude of technical terms and subtle reasonings; but lead us directly to the source whence our most ample conceptions of Deity are to be derived, that, from a steady and enlightened contemplation of the effects, we may learn the greatness of the Cause; and their example, in this respect, ought, doubtless, to be a pattern for every religious instructor.

SECTION II.

Illustrations of the Omnipotence of the Deity.

In order to elucidate more distinctly what has been now stated, I shall select a few illustrations of some of the Natural attributes of the Deity. And, in the first place, I shall offer a few considerations which have a tendency to direct, and to amplify our conceptions of Divine Power.

Omnipotence is that attribute of the Divine Being, by which he can accomplish every thing that does not imply a contra

diction—however far it may transcend the comprehension of finite minds. By his power the vast system of universal nature was called from nothing into existence, and is continually supported, in all its movements, from age to age.—In elucidating this perfection of God, we might derive some striking illustrations from the records of his dispensations towards man, in the early ages of the world—when he overwhelmed the earth with the deluge, which covered the tops of the highest mountains, and swept the crowded population of the ancient world into a watery grave—when he demolished Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them, with fire from heaven—when he slew all the first-born of Egypt, and turned their rivers into blood—when he divided the Red Sea, and the waters of Jordan before the tribes of Israel—when he made the earth to open its jaws and swallow up Korah and all his company—and when he caused Mount Sinai to smoke and tremble at his presence. But, these and similar events, however awful, astonishing, and worthy of remembrance, were only *transitory* exertions of divine power, and are not calculated, and were never intended, to impress the mind in so powerful a manner as those displays of Omnipotence which are exhibited in the ordinary movements of the material universe. We have no hesitation in asserting, that, with regard to this attribute of the Divinity, there is a more grand and impressive display in the Works of Nature, than in all the events recorded in the Sacred History. Nor ought this remark to be considered as throwing the least reflection on the fullness and sufficiency of the Scripture revelation; for that revelation as having a special reference to a *moral* economy, has for its object, to give a more particular display of the *moral* than of the *natural* perfections of God. The miracles to which we have now referred, and every other supernatural fact recorded in the Bible were not intended so much to display the *plenitude* of the power of Deity, as to bear testimony to the Divine mission of particular messengers, and to confirm the truths they declared. It was not, for example, merely to display the energies of Almighty power, that the waters of the Red Sea were dried up before the thousands of Israel, but to give a solemn and striking attestation to all concerned, that the Most High God had taken this people under his peculiar protection—that he had appointed Moses as their leader and legislator—and that they were bound to receive and obey the statutes he delivered. The most appropriate and impressive illustrations of Omnipotence, are those which are taken from the *permanent* operations of Deity, which are visible every moment in the

universe around us; or, in other words, those which are derived from a detail of the facts which have been observed in the material world, respecting *magnitude* and *motion*.

In the first place, *the immense quantity of matter* contained in the universe, presents a most striking display of Almighty power.

In endeavouring to form a definite notion on this subject, the mind is bewildered in its conceptions, and is at a loss where to begin or to end its excursions. In order to form something approximating to a well defined idea we must pursue a train of thought commencing with those magnitudes which the mind can easily grasp, proceeding through all the intermediate gradations of magnitude, and fixing the attention on every portion of the chain, till we arrive at the object or magnitude of which we wish to form a conception. We must endeavour, in the first place, to form a conception of the bulk of the world in which we dwell, which, though only a point in comparison of the whole material universe, is, in reality, a most astonishing magnitude, which the mind cannot grasp, without a laborious effort. We can form some definite idea of those protuberate masses we denominate *hills*, which arise above the surface of our plains; but were we transported to the mountainous scenery of Switzerland, to the stupendous range of the Andes in South America, or to the Himmalayan mountains in India, where masses of earth and rocks, in every variety of shape, extend several hundreds of miles in different directions, and rear their projecting summits beyond the region of the clouds —we should find some difficulty in forming an adequate conception of the objects of our contemplation. For, (to use the words of one who had been a spectator of such scenes,) "Amidst those trackless regions of intense silence and solitude, we cannot contemplate, but with feelings of awe and admiration, the enormous masses of variegated matter which lie around, beneath, and above us. The mind labours, as it were, to form a definite idea of those objects of oppressive grandeur, and feels unable to grasp the august objects which compose the surrounding scene." But what are all these mountainous masses, however variegated and sublime, when compared with the bulk of the whole earth? Were they hurled from their basis, and precipitated into the vast Pacific Ocean, they would all disappear in a moment, except perhaps a few projecting tops, which, like a number of small islands, might be seen rising a few fathoms above the surface of the waters.

The earth is a globe whose diameter is nearly 8,000

miles, and its circumference about 25,000, and, consequently, its surface contains nearly two hundred millions of square miles—a magnitude too great for the mind to take in at *one* conception. In order to form a tolerable conception of the whole, we must endeavour to take a leisurely survey of its different parts. Were we to take our station on the top of a mountain, of a moderate size, and survey the surrounding landscape, we should perceive an extent of view stretching 40 miles in every direction, forming a circle 80 miles in diameter, and 250 in circumference, and comprehending an area of 5,000 square miles. In such a situation the terrestial scene around and beneath us, consisting of hills and plains, towns and villages, rivers and lakes—would form one of the largest objects which the eye, and even the imagination, can steadily grasp at one time. But such an object, grand and extensive as it is, forms no more than the *forty thousandth part* of the terraqueous globe ; so that before we can acquire an adequate conception of the magnitude of our own world, we must conceive 40,000 landscapes of a similar extent, to pass in review before us : and were a scene, of the magnitude now stated, to pass before us every hour, till all the diversified scenery of the earth were brought under our view, and were 12 hours a-day allotted for the observation, it would require 9 years and 48 days before the whole surface of the globe could be contemplated, even in this *general* and *rapid* manner. But, such a variety of successive landscapes passing before the eye, even although it were possible to be realized, would convey only a very vague and imperfect conception of the scenery of our world ; for objects at the distance of 40 miles cannot be distinctly perceived ; the only view which would be satisfactory would be, that which is comprehended within the range of 3 or 4 miles from the spectator.

Again, I have already stated, that the surface of the earth contains nearly 200,000,000 of square miles.—Now, were a person to set out on a minute survey of the terraqueous globe, and to travel till he passed along every square mile on its surface, and to continue his route without intermission, at the rate of 30 miles every day, it would require 18,264 years before he could finish his tour, and complete the survey of " this huge rotundity on which we tread :" so that, had he commenced his excursion on the day in which Adam was created, and continued it to the present hour, he would not have accomplished one-third part of this vast tour.

In estimating the size and extent of the earth, we ought also to take into consideration, the vast variety of objects with

which it is diversified, and the numerous animated beings with which it is stored ;—the great divisions of land and water, the continents, seas, and islands, into which it is distributed ; the lofty ranges of mountains which rear their heads to the clouds; the unfathomed abysses of the ocean ; its vast subterraneous caverns and burning mountains ; and the lakes, rivers, and stately forests with which it is so magnificently adorned ;—the many millions of animals, of every size and form, from the elephant to the mite, which traverse its surface ; the numerous tribes of fishes, from the enormous whale to the diminutive shrimp, which " play" in the mighty ocean ; the ærial tribes which sport in the regions above us, and the vast mass of the surrounding atmosphere, which encloses the earth and all its inhabitants as " with a swaddling band." The immense variety of beings with which our terrestrial habitation is furnished, conspires, with every other consideration, to exalt our conceptions to that power by which our globe, and all that it contains, were brought into existence.

The preceding illustrations, however, exhibit the vast extent of the earth, considered only as a mere superficies. But we know that the earth is a solid globe, whose specific gravity is nearly five times denser than water, or about twice as dense as the mass of earth and rocks which compose its surface. Though we cannot dig into its bowels beyond a mile in perpendicular depth, to explore its hidden wonders, yet we may easily conceive what a vast and indescribable mass of matter must be contained between the two opposite portions of its external circumference, reaching 8000 miles in every direction. The solid contents of this ponderous ball is no less than 263,858,149,120 cubical miles—a mass of material substance of which we can form but a very faint and imperfect conception—in proportion to which all the lofty mountains which rise above its surface, are less than a few grains of sand, when compared with the largest artificial globe. Were the earth a hollow sphere, surrounded merely with an external shell of earth and water, 10 miles thick, its internal cavity would be sufficient to contain a quantity of materials *one hundred and thirty-three times* greater than the whole mass of continents, islands, and oceans, on its surface, and the foundations on which they are supported. We have the strongest reasons, however, to conclude, that the earth, in its general structure, is one solid mass, from the surface to the centre, excepting perhaps, a few caverns scattered, here and there, amidst its subterraneous recesses : and that its density gradually increases from its surface to its central regions. What an enormous mass of

materials, then, is comprehended within the limits of that globe on which we tread! The mind labours, as it were, to comprehend the mighty idea, and after all its exertion, feels itself unable to take in such an astonishing magnitude at *one* comprehensive grasp. How great must be the power of that Being who commanded it to spring from nothing into existence, who "measureth the ocean in the hollow of his hand, who weigheth the mountains in scales, and hangeth the earth upon nothing!"

It is essentially requisite, before proceeding to the survey of objects and magnitudes of a superior order, that we should endeavour, by such a train of thought as the preceding, to form some tolerable and clear conception of the bulk of the globe we inhabit; for it is the only body we can use as a standard of comparison to guide the mind in its conceptions, when it roams abroad to other regions of material existence. And, from what has been now stated it appears, that we have no *adequate* conception of a magnitude of so vast an extent; or, at least, that the mind cannot, in any one instant, form to itself a distinct and comprehensive idea of it, in any measure corresponding to the reality.

Hitherto, then, we have fixed only on a determinate magnitude—on a scale of a few inches, as it were, in order to assist us in our measurement and conception of magnitudes still more august and astonishing. When we contemplate, by the light of science, those magnificent globes which float around us, in the concave of the sky, the earth with all its sublime scenery, stupendous as it is, dwindles into an inconsiderable ball. If we pass from our globe to some of the other bodies of the planetary system, we shall find that one of these stupendous orbs is more than 900 times the size of our world, and encircled with a ring 200,000 miles in diameter, which would nearly reach from the earth to the moon, and would enclose within its vast circumference, several hundreds of worlds as large as ours. Another of these planetary bodies, which appears to the vulgar eye only as a brilliant speck on the vault of heaven, is found to be of such a size, that it would require 1,400 globes of the bulk of the earth to form one equal to it in dimensions. The whole of the bodies which compose the solar system, (without taking the sun and the comets into account,) contain a mass of matter 2,500 times greater than that of the earth. The sun himself is 520 times larger than all the planetary globes taken together; and one million, three hundred thousand times larger than the terraqueous globe. This is one of the most glorious and magnificent visible ob-

jects, which either the eye, or the imagination, can contemplate; especially when we consider, what perpetual, and incomprehensible, and powerful influence he exerts, what warmth, and beauty, and activity, he diffuses, not only on the globe we inhabit, but over the more extensive regions of surrounding worlds. His energy extends to the utmost limit of the planetary system—to the planet Herschel, which revolves at the distance of 1,800 millions of miles from his surface, and there he dispenses light, and colour, and comfort, to all the beings connected with that far-distant orb, and to all the moons which roll around it.

Here the imagination begins to be overpowered and bewildered in its conceptions of magnitude, when it has advanced scarcely a single step in its excursions through the material world: For it is highly probable that all the matter contained within the limits of the solar system, incomprehensible as its magnitude appears, bears a smaller proportion to the whole mass of the material universe, than a single grain of sand to all the particles of matter contained in the body of the sun and his attending planets.

If we extend our views from the solar system to the starry heavens, we have to penetrate, in our imagination, a space which the swiftest ball that was ever projected, though in perpetual motion, would not traverse in ten hundred thousand years. In those trackless regions of immensity, we behold an assemblage of resplendent globes, similar to the sun in size, and in glory, and, doubtless, accompanied with a retinue of worlds, revolving, like our own, around their attractive influence. The immense distance at which the nearest stars are known to be placed, proves that they are bodies of a prodigious size, not inferior to our sun, and that they shine, not by reflected rays, but by their own native light. But bodies encircled with such refulgent splendour, would be of little use in the economy of Jehovah's empire, unless surrounding worlds were cheered by their benign influence, and enlightened by their beams. Every star is, therefore, with good reason, concluded to be a sun, no less spacious than ours, surrounded by a host of planetary globes, which revolve around it as a centre, and derive from it light, and heat, and comfort. Nearly a thousand of these luminaries may be seen in a clear winter night, by the naked eye; so that a mass of matter equal to a thousand solar systems, or to *thirteen hundred and twenty millions of globes of the size of the earth*, may be perceived, by every common observer, in the canopy of heaven. But all the celestial orbs which are perceived by the unassisted sight, do

not form the eighty thousandth part of those which may be descried by the help of optical instruments. The telescope has enabled us to descry, in certain spaces of the heavens, thousand of stars where the naked eye could scarcely discern twenty. The late celebrated astronomer, Dr. Herschel, has informed us, that, in the most crowded parts of the Milky-way, when exploring that region with his best glasses, he has had fields of view which contained no less than 588 stars, and these were continued for many minutes: so that "in one quarter of an hour's time there passed no less than *one hundred and sixteen thousand stars* through the field of view of his telescope."

It has been computed, that nearly *one hundred millions* of stars might be perceived by the most perfect instruments, were all the regions of the sky thoroughly explored. And yet, all this vast assemblage of suns and worlds, when compared with what lies beyond the utmost boundaries of human vision, in the immeasurable spaces of creation, may be no more than as the smallest particle of vapour to the immense ocean. Immeasurable regions of space lie beyond the utmost limits of mortal view, into which even imagination itself can scarcely penetrate, and which are, doubtless, replenished with the operations of Divine Wisdom and Omnipotence. For, it cannot be supposed, that a being so diminutive as man, whose stature scarcely exceeds six feet—who vanishes from the sight at the distance of a league—whose whole habitation is invisible from the nearest star—whose powers of vision are so imperfect, and whose mental faculties are so limited—it cannot be supposed that man, who "dwells in tabernacles of clay, who is crushed before the moth," and chained down, by the force of gravitation, to the surface of a small planet,—should be able to descry the utmost boundaries of the empire of Him who fills immensity, and dwells in "light unapproachable." That portion of his dominions, however, which lies within the range of our view, presents such a scene of magnificence and grandeur, as must fill the mind of every reflecting person with astonishment and reverence, and constrain him to exclaim, "Great is our Lord, and of great power, his understanding is infinite." "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained,—what is man that thou art mindful of him!" "I have heard of thee by hearing of the ear;" I have listened to subtle disquisions on thy character and perfections, and have been but little affected, "but now mine eye

seeth thee; wherefore I humble myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

In order to feel the full force of the impression made by such contemplations, the mind must pause at every step, in its excursions through the boundless regions of material existence: for it its not by a mere attention to the figures and numbers by which the magnitudes of the great bodies of the universe are expressed, that we arrive at the most distinct and ample conceptions of objects so grand and overwhelming. The mind, in its intellectual range, must dwell on every individual scene it contemplates, and on the various objects of which it is composed. It must add scene to scene, magnitude to magnitude, and compare smaller objects with greater—a range of mountains with the whole earth, the earth with the planet Jupiter, Jupiter with the sun, the sun with a thousand stars, a thousand stars with 80 millions, and 80 millions with all the boundless extent which lies beyond the limits of mortal vision; and, at every step of this mental process, sufficient time must be allowed for the imagination to expatiate on the objects before it, till the ideas approximate, as near as possible, to the reality. In order to form a comprehensive conception of the extent of the terraqueous globe, the mind must dwell on an extensive landscape, and the objects with which it is adorned; it must endeavour to survey the many thousands of diversified landscapes which the earth exhibits—the hills and plains, the lakes and rivers, and mountains, which stretch in endless variety over its surface—it must dive into the vast caverns of the ocean—penetrate into the subterraneous regions of the globe, and wing its way amidst clouds and tempests, through the surrounding atmosphere. It must next extend its flight through the most expansive regions of the solar system, realizing, in imagination, those magnificent scenes which can be descried neither by the naked eye, nor by the telescope; and comparing the extent of our sublunary world, with the more magnificent globes that roll around us. Leaving the sun and all his attendant planets behind, till they have diminished to the size of a small twinkling star, it must next wing its way to the starry regions, and pass from one system of worlds to another, from one Nebulæ* to another, from one region of Nebulæ to another, till it arrive at the utmost boundaries of creation which human genius has explored. It must also endeavor to extend its flight beyond all that is visible by the best telescopes, and expatiate at large in that boundless ex-

* For an account of the *Nebulæ*, see Ch. II. Art. *Astronomy*.

panse into which no human eye has yet penetrated, and which is, doubtless, replenished with other worlds, and systems, and firmaments, where the operations of infinite power and beneficence are displayed in endless variety, throughout the illimitable regions of space.

Here, then, with reverence, let us pause, and wonder! Over all this vast assemblage of material existence, God presides. Amidst the diversified objects and intelligences it contains, he is eternally and essentially present. By his unerring wisdom, all its complicated movements are directed. By his Almighty fiat, it emerged from nothing into existence, and is continually supported from age to age. "HE SPAKE AND IT WAS DONE; HE COMMANDED AND IT STOOD FAST." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the spirit of his mouth." What an astonishing display of Divine power is here exhibited to our view! How far transcending all finite comprehension must be the energies of Him who only "spake, and it was done;" who only gave the command, and this mighty system of the universe, with all its magnificence, started into being! The infinite ease with which this vast fabric was reared, leads us irresistibly to conclude, that there are powers and energies in the Divine mind which have never yet been exerted, and which may unfold themselves to intelligent beings, in the production of still more astonishing and magnificent effects, during an endless succession of existence. That man who is not impressed with a venerable and overwhelming sense of the power and majesty of Jehovah, by such comtemplations, must have a mind incapable of ardent religious emotions, and unqualified for appreciating the grandeur of that Being "whose kingdom ruleth over all." And shall such ennobling views be completely withheld from a Christian audience? Shall it be considered as a matter of mere indifference, whether their views of the Creator's works be limited to the sphere of a few miles around them, or extended to ten thousand worlds?—whether they shall be left to view the operations of the Almighty throughout eternity past and to come, as confined to a small globe placed in the immensity of space, with a number of brilliant studs fixed in the arch of heaven, at a few miles distance; or, as extending through the boundless dimensions of space?—whether they shall be left to entertain no higher idea of the Divine majesty than what may be due to one of the superior orders of the seraphim or cherubim,—or, whether they shall be directed to form the most august conceptions of the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, corresponding to the displays he

has given of his glory in his visible works? If it be not, both reason and piety require, that such illustrations of the Divine perfections should occasionally be exhibited to their view.

In the next place, the *rapid motions* of the great bodies of the universe, no less than their magnitudes, display the Infinite Power of the Creator.

We can acquire accurate ideas of the relative velocities of moving bodies, only by comparing the motions, with which we are familiar, with one another, and with those which lie beyond the general range of our minute inspection. We can acquire a pretty accurate conception of the velocity of a ship, impelled by the wind—of a steam-boat—of a race horse—of a bird darting through the air—of an arrow flying from a bow—and of the clouds when impelled by a stormy wind. The velocity of a ship is from 8 to 12 miles an hour—of a race horse, from 20 to 30 miles—of a bird, say from 50 to 60 miles, and of the clouds, in a violent hurricane, from 80 to 100 miles an hour. The motion of a ball from a loaded cannon is incomparably swifter than any of the motions now stated; but of the velocity of such a body we have a less accurate idea; because, its rapidity being so great, we cannot trace it distinctly by the eye through its whole range, from the mouth of the cannon to the object against which it is impelled. By experiments, it has been found, that its rate of motion is from 480 to 800 miles in an hour, but it is retarded every moment, by the resistance of the air and the attraction of the earth. This velocity, however, great as it is, bears no sensible proportion to the rate of motion which is found among the celestial orbs. That such enormous masses of matter should move at all, is wonderful; but when we consider the amazing velocity with which they are impelled, we are lost in astonishment. The planet Jupiter, in describing his circuit round the sun, moves at the rate of 29,000 miles an hour. The planet Venus, one of the nearest and most brilliant of the celestial bodies, and about the same size as the earth, is found to move through the spaces of the firmament at the rate of 76,000 miles an hour; and the planet Mercury, with a velocity of no less than 105,000 miles an hour, or 1750 miles in a minute—a motion two hundred times swifter than that of a cannon ball.

These velocities will appear still more astonishing, if we consider the magnitude of the bodies which are thus impelled, and the immense forces which are requisite to carry them along in their courses. However rapidly a ball flies from the mouth of a cannon, it is the flight of a body only a *few inches* in diameter; but one of the bodies, whose motion has been

just now stated, is *eighty-nine thousand miles* in diameter, and would comprehend, within its vast circumference, more than a thousand globes as large as the earth. Could we contemplate such motions, from a fixed point, at the distance of only a few hundreds of miles from the bodies thus impelled—it would raise our admiration to its highest pitch, it would overwhelm all our faculties, and, in our present state, would produce an impression of awe, and even of terror, beyond the power of language to express. The earth contains a mass of matter equal in weight to at least 2,200,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons, supposing its mean density to be only about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times greater than water. To move this ponderous mass a single inch beyond its position, were it fixed in a quiescent state, would require a mechanical force almost beyond the power of numbers to express. The physical force of all the myriads of intelligences within the bounds of the planetary system, though their powers were far superior to those of man, would be altogether inadequate to the production of such a motion. How much more must be the force requisite to impel it with a velocity one hundred and forty times swifter than a cannon ball, or 68,000 miles an hour, the actual rate of its motion, in its course round the sun! But whatever degree of mechanical power would be requisite to produce such a stupendous effect, it would require a force one hundred and fifty times greater to impel the planet Jupiter, in his actual course, through the heavens! Even the planet Saturn, one of the slowest moving bodies of our system, a globe 900 times larger than the earth, is impelled through the regions of space at the rate of 22,000 miles an hour, carrying along with him two stupendous rings, and seven moons larger than ours, through his whole course round the central luminary. Were we placed within a thousand miles of this stupendous globe, (a station which superior beings may occasionally occupy,) where its hemisphere, encompassed by its magnificent rings, would fill the whole extent of our vision—the view of such a ponderous and glorious object, flying with such amazing velocity before us, would infinitely exceed every idea of grandeur we can derive from terrestrial scenes, and overwhelm our powers with astonishment and awe. Under such an emotion, we could only exclaim, "GREAT AND MARVELLOUS ARE THY WORKS, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY!" The ideas of *strength* and *power* implied in the impulsion of such enormous masses of matter through the illimitable tracts of space, are forced upon the mind with irresistible energy, far surpassing what any abstract propositions or reasonings can convey; and con-

strain us to exclaim, "Who is a strong Lord like unto thee! Thy right hand is become glorious in power! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"

If we consider the *immense number* of bodies thus impelled through the vast spaces of the universe—the rapidity with which the *comets*, when near the sun, are carried through the regions they traverse,—if we consider the high probability, if not absolute certainty, that the sun, with all his attendant planets and comets, is impelled with a still greater degree of velocity towards some distant region of space, or around some wide circumference—that all the thousands of systems of that nebulæ to which the sun belongs, are moving in a similar manner—that all the nebulæ in the heavens are moving around some magnificent central body—in short, that all the suns and worlds in the universe are in rapid and perpetual motion, as constituent portions of one grand and boundless empire, of which Jehovah is the Sovereign—and, if we consider still farther, that all these mighty movements have been going on, without intermission, during the course of many centuries, and some of them, perhaps, for myriads of ages before the foundations of our world were laid—it is impossible for the human mind to form any adequate idea of the stupendous forces which are in incessant operation throughout the unlimited empire of the Almighty. To estimate such mechanical force, even in a single instance, completely baffles the mathematician's skill, and sets the power of numbers at defiance. "Language," and figures, and comparisons, are 'lost in wonders so sublime," and the mind, overpowered with such reflections, is irresistibly led upwards, to search for the cause in that OMNIPOTENT BEING who upholds the pillars of the universe—the thunder of whose power none can comprehend. While contemplating such august objects, how emphatic and impressive appears the language of the sacred oracles, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? Great things doth he which we cannot comprehend. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the glory, and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and earth is thine. Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works. Thou art great, and dost wondrous things, thou art God alone. Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of all things, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world

stand in awe of him ; for, he *spake*, and *it was done ;* he commanded, and it stood fast."

Again, the *immense spaces* which surround the heavenly bodies, and in which they perform their revolutions, tend to expand our conceptions on this subject, and to illustrate the magnificence of the Divine operations. In whatever point of view we contemplate the scenery of the heavens, an idea of grandeur irresistibly bursts upon the mind ; and, if empty space can, in any sense, be considered as an object of sublimity, nothing can fill the mind with a grander idea of magnitude and extension, than the amplitude of the scale on which planetary systems are constructed. Around the body of the sun there is allotted a cubical space, 3,600 millions of miles in diameter, in which eleven planetary globes revolve—every one being separated from another, by intervals of many millions of miles. The space which surrounds the utmost limits of our system, extending in every direction, to the nearest fixed stars, is, at least, 40,000,000,000,000 miles in diameter ; and, it is highly probable, that every star is surrounded by a space of equal, or even of greater extent. A body impelled with the greatest velocity which art can produce,—a cannon ball, for instance, would require twenty years to pass through the space that intervenes between the earth and the sun, and four millions, seven hundred thousand years, ere it could reach the nearest star. Though the stars seem to be crowded together in clusters, and some of them almost to touch one another, yet the distance between any two stars which seem to make the nearest approach, is such as neither words can express, nor imagination fathom. These immense spaces are as unfathomable on the one hand, as the magnitude of the bodies which move in them, and their prodigious velocities, are incomprehensible on the other ; and they form a part of those magnificent proportions according to which the fabric of universal nature was arranged—all corresponding to the majesty of that infinite and incomprehensible Being, "who measures the ocean in the hollow of his hand, and meteth out the heavens with a span." How wonderful that bodies at such prodigious distances should exert a mutual influence on one another ! that the moon at the distance of 240,000 miles should raise tides in the ocean, and currents in the atmosphere ! that the sun, at the distance of ninety-five millions of miles, should raise the vapors, move the ocean, direct the course of the winds, fructify the earth, and distribute light, and heat, and color, through every region of the globe ; yea, that his attractive influence, and fructifying energy, should extend even to the planet Herschel, at the distance

of eighteen hundred millions of miles! So that, in every point of view in which the universe is contemplated, we perceive the same *grand scale* of operation by which the Almighty has arranged the provinces of his universal kingdom.

We would now ask, in the name of all that is sacred, whether such magnificent manifestations of Deity ought to be considered as irrelevant in the business of religion, and whether they ought to be thrown completely into the shade, in the discussions which take place in religious topics, in "the assemblies of the saints?" If religion consists in the intellectual apprehension of the perfections of God, and in the moral effects produced by such an apprehension—if all the rays of glory emitted by the luminaries of heaven, are only so many reflections of the grandeur of Him who dwells in light unapproachable—if they have a tendency to assist the mind in forming its conceptions of that ineffable Being, whose uncreated glory cannot be directly contemplated—and if they are calculated to produce a sublime and awful impression on all created intelligences,—shall we rest contented with a less glorious idea of God than his works are calculated to afford? Shall we disregard the works of the Lord, and contemn "the operations of his hands," and that, too, in the face of all the invitations on this subject, addressed to us from heaven? For thus saith Jehovah: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, who bringeth forth their host by number.—I, the Lord, who maketh all things, who stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spread abroad the earth by himself; all their host have I commanded." And, if, at the command of God, we lift up our eyes to the "firmament of his power," surely we ought to do it, not with a brute "unconscious gaze," not with the vacant stare of a savage, not as it we were still enveloped with the mists and prejudices of the dark ages—but as surrounded by that blaze of light which modern science has thrown upon the scenery of the sky, in order that we may contemplate, with fixed attention, all that enlightened reason, aided by the nicest observations, has ascertained respecting the magnificence of the celestial orbs. To overlook the sublime discoveries of modern times, to despise them, or to call in question their reality, as some religionists have done, because they bring to our ears such astonishing reports of the "eternal power" and majesty of Jehovah—is to act as if we were afraid lest the Deity should be represented as more grand and magnificent than he really is, and as if we would be better pleased to pay him a less share of homage and adoration than is due to his name.

Perhaps some may be disposed to insinuate, that the views now stated are above the level of ordinary comprehension, and founded too much on scientific considerations, to be stated in detail to a common audience. To any insinuations of this kind, it may be replied, that such illustrations as those to which we have referred, are more easily comprehended than many of those abstract discussions to which they are frequently accustomed ; since they are definite and tangible, being derived from those objects which strike the senses and the imagination. Any person of common understanding may be made to comprehend the leading ideas of extended space, magnitude, and motion, which have been stated above, provided the descriptions be sufficiently simple, clear and well defined ; and should they be at a loss to comprehend the principles on which the conclusions rest, or the mode by which the magnificence of the works of God has been ascertained, an occasional reference to such topics would excite them to inquiry and investigation, and to the exercise of their powers of observation and reasoning on such subjects—which are too frequently directed to far less important objects. The following illustration, however, stands clear of every objection of this kind, and is level to the comprehension of every man of common sense. —Either the earth moves round its axis once in twenty-four hours—or, the sun, moon, planets, comets, stars, and the whole frame of the universe move around the earth, in the same time. There is no alternative, or third opinion, that can be formed on this point. If the earth revolve on its axis every 24 hours, to produce the alternate succession of day and night, the portions of its surface about the equator must move at the rate of more than a thousand miles an hour, since the earth is more than twenty-four thousand miles in circumference. This view of the fact, when attentively considered, furnishes a most sublime and astonishing idea. That a globe of so vast dimensions, with all its load of mountains, continents, and oceans, comprising within its circumference a mass of two hundred and sixty-four thousand million of cubical miles, should whirl around with so amazing velocity, gives us a most august and impressive conception of the greatness of that Power which first set it in motion, and continues the rapid whirl from age to age ! Though the huge masses of the Alpine mountains were in a moment detached from their foundations, carried aloft through the regions of the air, and tossed into the Mediterranean sea, it would convey no idea of a force equal to that which is every moment exerted, if the earth revolve on its axis. But should the motion of our earth be called in

question, or denied, the idea of force, or power, will be indefinitely increased. For, in this case, it must necessarily be admitted, that the heavens, with all the innumerable host of stars, have a diurnal motion around the globe ; which motion must be inconceivably more rapid than that of the earth, on the supposition of its motion. For, in proportion as the celestial bodies are distant from the earth, in the same proportion would be the rapidity of their movements. The sun, on this supposition, would move at the rate of 414,000 miles in a minute ; the nearest stars, at the rate of fourteen hundred millions of miles in a *second :* and the most distant luminaries, with a degree of swiftness which no numbers could express.* Such velocities, too, would be the rate of motion, not merely of a single globe like the earth, but of all the ten thousand times ten thousand spacious globes that exist within the boundaries of creation. This view conveys an idea of power, still more august and overwhelming than any of the views already stated, and we dare not presume to assert, that such a degree of physical force is beyond the limits of infinite perfection ; but on the supposition it existed, it would confound all our ideas of the wisdom and intelligence of the Divine mind, and would appear altogether inconsistent with the character which the scripture gives us of the Deity as "the only wise God." For, it would exhibit a stupendous system of means altogether disproportioned to the end intended—namely, to produce the alternate succession of day and night to the inhabitants of our globe, which is more beautifully and harmoniously affected by a simple rotation on its axis, as is the case with the other globes which compose the planetary system. Such considerations, however, show us, that, on whatever hypothesis, whether on the vulgar or the scientific, or in whatever other point of view, the frame of nature may be contemplated, the mind is irresistibly impressed with ideas of power, grandeur and magnificence. And, therefore, when an inquiring mind is directed to contemplate the works of God, on any hypothesis it may choose, it has a tendency to rouse reflection, and to stimulate the exercise of the moral and intellectual faculties, on objects which are worthy of the dignity of immortal minds.

We may now be, in some measure, prepared to decide, whether illustrations of the omnipotence of the Deity, derived from the system of the material world, or those vague and metaphysical disquisitions which are generally given in theological systems be most calculated to impress the mind, and to

* See Appendix, No. 1.

inspire it with reverence and adoration. The following is a description given of this attribute of God, by a well known systematic writer, who has generally been considered as a judicious and orthodox divine :—

"God is almighty, Rev. i. 18, chap. iv. 8. This will evidently appear, in that, if he be infinite in all his other perfections, he must be so in power : thus, if he be omniscient, he knows what is possible or expedient to be done ; and if he be an infinite sovereign, he wills whatever shall come to pass. Now this knowledge would be insignificant, and his power inefficacious, were he not infinite in power, or almighty. Again, this might be argued from his justice, either in rewarding or punishing ; for if he were not infinite in power, he could do neither of these, at least so far as to render him the object of that desire or fear, which is agreeable to the nature of these perfections ; neither could infinite faithfulness accomplish all the promises which he hath made, so as to excite that trust, and dependence which is a part of religious worship ; nor could he say without limitation, as he does, *I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass ; I have purposed it, I will also do it ;* Isa. xlvi. 11.—But since power is visible in, and demonstrated by its effect, and infinite power, by those effects which cannot be produced by a creature, we may observe the almighty power of God in all his works, both of nature and grace : thus his eternal power is understood, as the apostle says, *By the things that are made*, Rom. i. 20, not that there was an eternal production of things, but the exerting this power in time, proves it to be infinite and truly divine ; for no creature can produce the smallest particle of matter out of nothing, much less furnish the various species of creatures, with those endowments in which they excel one another, and set forth their Creator's glory. And the glory of his power is no less visible in the works of providence, whereby he upholds all things, disposes of them according to his pleasure, and brings about events which only he who has an almighty arm can effect."—*Ridgley's Body of Divinity*, p. 39.

This is the whole that Dr. Ridgley judges it necessary to state, in illustration of the attribute of Omnipotence, except what he says in relation to its operation "in the work of grace," in "the propagation and success of the Gospel," &c. subjects, to which the idea of power, or physical energy, does not properly apply. Such, however, are the meagre and abstract disquisitions generally given by most systematic writers. There is a continual play on the term "Infinite," which, to most minds, conveys no idea at all, unless it be associated with

ample conceptions of motion, magnitude, and extension; and it is constantly applied to subjects to which it was never intended to apply, such as "infinite faithfulness, infinite justice, infinite truth," &c. an application of the term which is never sanctioned by Scripture, and which has a tendency to introduce confusion into our conceptions of the perfections of God. Granting that the statements and reasonings in such an extract as the above were unquestionable, yet what impression can they make upon the mind? Would an ignorant person feel his conceptions of the Divinity much enlarged, or his moral powers aroused by such vague and general statements? And, if not, it appears somewhat unaccountable, that those sources of illustration, which would convey the most ample and definite views of the "eternal power" and glory of God, should be studiously concealed from the view. Vague descriptions and general views of any object will never be effectual in awakening the attention, and arresting the faculties of the mind. The heart will always remain unimpressed, and the understanding will never be thoroughly excited in its exercise, unless the intellect have presented before it a well-defined and interesting object, and be enabled to survey it in its various aspects; and this object must always have a relation to the material world, whether it be viewed in connection with religion, or with any other subject.

Thus I have endeavoured, in the preceding sketches, to present a few detached illustrations of the omnipotence and grandeur of the Deity, as displayed in the vast magnitude of the material universe—the stupendous velocities of the celestial bodies—and in the immeasurable regions of space which surround them, and in which their motions are performed. Such a magnificent spectacle as the fabric of the universe presents—so majestic, God-like, and overwhelming, to beings who dwell "in tabernacles of clay"—was surely never intended to be overlooked, or to be gazed at with indifference, by creatures endowed with reason and intelligence, and destined to an immortal existence. In forming a universe composed of so many immense systems and worlds, and replenished with such a variety of sensitive and intelligent existences, the Creator, doubtless, intended that it should make a sublime and reverential impression on the minds of all the intellectual beings to whom it might be displayed, and that it should convey some *palpable* idea of the infinite glories of his nature, in so far as material objects can be supposed to adumbrate the

perfections of a spiritual and uncreated Essence. Dwelling in "light inaccessible" to mortals, and for ever veiled from the highest created being, by the pure spirituality and immensity of his nature, there is no conceivable mode by which the infinite grandeur of Deity could be exhibited to finite intelligences, but through the medium of those magnificient operations which are incessantly going forward throughout the boundless regions of space. Concealed from the gaze of all the "principalities and powers" in heaven, in the unfathomable depths of his Essence, he displays his presence in the universe he has created, and the glory of his power, by launching magnificent worlds into existence, by adorning them with diversified splendors, by peopling them with various ranks of intelligent existence, and by impelling them in their movements through the illimitable tracts of creation.

It will readily be admitted by every enlightened Christian, that it must be a highly desirable attainment, to acquire the most glorious idea of the Divine Being which the limited capacity of our minds is capable of receiving. This is one of the grand difficulties in religion. The idea of a Being purely IMMATERIAL, yet pervading infinite space, and possessed of no sensible qualities, confounds and bewilders the human intellect, so that its conceptions, on the one hand, are apt to verge towards extravagancy, while, on the other, they are apt to degenerate into something approaching to inanity. Mere abstract ideas and reasonings respecting infinity, eternity, and absolute perfection, however sublime we may conceive them to be, completely fail in arresting the understanding, and affecting the heart; our conceptions become vague, empty, and confused, for want of a material vehicle to give them order, stability, and expansion. Something of the nature of vast extension, of splendid and variegated objects, and of mighty movements, is absolutely necessary, in order to convey to spirits dwelling in bodies of clay, a definite conception of the invisible glories of the Eternal Mind; and, therefore, in the immense variety of material existence with which the universe is adorned, we find every requisite assistance of this kind to direct and expand our views of the great object of our adoration. When the mind is perplexed and overwhelmed with its conceptions, when it labors as it were, to form some well-defined conceptions of an Infinite Being, it here finds some tangible objects on which to fix, some sensible *substratum* for its thoughts to rest upon for a little, while it attempts to penetrate, in its excursions, into those distant regions which eye hath not seen, and to connect the whole of its mental survey

with the energies of the "King, Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible."

To such a train of thought we are uniformly directed in the sacred oracles, where Jehovah is represented as describing himself by the *effects* which his power and wisdom have produced.—"Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." "I have made the earth and created man upon it, my hands have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded." "Hearken unto me, O Israel: I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together." "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and weighed the mountains in scales? He who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof, are as grasshoppers; that stretched out the heavens as a curtain, that fainteth not, neither is weary." "The Lord made the heavens, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; honor and majesty are before him, and his kingdom ruleth over all."* Such sublime descriptions of Jehovah, and references to his material works, are reiterated in every portion of the sacred volume; and the import and sublimity of such expressions cannot be fully appreciated, unless we take into view all the magnificent objects which science has unveiled in the distant regions of creation.

This subject is calculated, not merely to overpower the intellect with ideas of sublimity and grandeur, but also to produce a deep *moral* impression upon the heart; and a Christian philosopher would be deficient in his duty, were he to overlook this tendency of the objects of his contemplation.

One important moral effect which this subject has a natural tendency to produce, is, profound HUMILITY. What an insignificant being does man appear, when he compares himself with the magnificence of creation, and with the myriads of exalted intelligences with which it is peopled! What are all the honors and splendors of this earthly ball, of which mortals are so proud, when placed in competition with the resplendent glories of the skies? Such a display as the Almighty has given of himself, in the magnitude and variety of his works,

* Isa. xlv. 18, 12. xlviii. 12, 13. xl. 12, 22, &c.

was evidently intended "to stain the pride" of all human grandeur, that "no flesh should glory in his presence." Yet, there is no disposition that appears so prominent among puny mortals, as pride, ambition, and vain-glory—the very opposite of humility, and of all those tempers which become those "who dwell in tabernacles of clay, and whose foundation is in the dust." Even without taking into account the state of man as a *depraved* intelligence, what is there in his situation that should inspire him with "lofty looks," and induce him to look down on his fellow-men with supercilious contempt? He derived his origin from the dust, he is allied with the beasts that perish, and he is fast hastening to the grave, where his carcass will become the food for noisome reptiles. He is every moment dependant on a Superior Being for every pulse that beats, and every breath he draws, and for all that he possesses; he is dependant even on the meanest of his species for his accommodations and comforts. He holds every enjoyment on the most precarious tenure,—his friends may be snatched in a moment from his embrace; his riches may take to themselves wings and fly away; and his health and beauty may be blasted in an hour, by a breath of wind. Hunger and thirst, cold and heat, poverty and disgrace, sorrow and disappointment, pain and disease, mingle themselves with all his pursuits and enjoyments.—His knowledge is circumscribed within the narrowest limits, his errors and follies are glaring and innumerable; and he stands as an almost undistinguishable atom, amidst the immensity of God's works. Still, with all these powerful inducements to the exercise of humility man dares to be proud and arrogant.

> ———"Man, proud Man,
> Dressed in a little brief authority,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
> As make the angels weep."

How affecting to contemplate the warrior, flushed with diabolical pride, pursuing his conquests through heaps of slain, in order to obtain possession of "a poor pitiable speck of perishing earth;" exclaiming in his rage, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them"—to behold the man of rank glorying in his wealth, and his empty titles, and looking around upon the inferior orders of his fellow-mortals as the worms of the dust—to behold the man of ambition pushing his way through bribery, and treachery, and slaughter, to gain possession of a throne, that he may look down with proud pre-eminence upon his

fellows—to behold the haughty airs of the noble dame, inflated with the idea of her beauty, and her high birth, as she struts along, surveying the ignoble crowd as if they were the dust beneath her feet—to behold the smatterer in learning, puffed up with a vain conceit of his superficial acquirements, when he has scarcely entered the porch of knowledge—in fine, to behold all ranks from the highest to the lowest, big with an idea of their own importance, and fired with pride and revenge at the least provocation, whether imaginary or real! How inconsistent the manifestations of such tempers, with the many humiliating circumstances of our present condition, and with the low rank which we hold in the scale of Universal Being?

It is not improbable, that there are in the universe, intelligences of a superior order, in whose breasts pride never found a place—to whom this globe of ours, and all its inhabitants, appear as inconsiderable as a drop of water filled with microscopic animalculæ, does to the proud lords of this earthly region. There is at least *one* Being to whom this sentiment is applicable, in its utmost extent:—"Before HIM all nations are as a drop of a bucket, and the inhabitants of the earth as grasshoppers; yea, they are as nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing and vanity." Could we wing our way, with the swiftness of a seraph, from sun to sun, and from world to world, till we had surveyed all the systems visible to the naked eye, which are only as a mere speck in the map of the universe—could we, at the same time, contemplate the glorious landscapes and scenes of grandeur they exhibit—could we also mingle with the pure and exalted intelligences which people those resplendent abodes, and behold their humble and ardent adorations of their Almighty Maker, their benign and condescending deportment towards one another; "each esteeming another better than himself," and all united in the bonds of the purest affection, without one haughty or discordant feeling—what indignation and astonishment would seize us, on our return to this obscure corner of creation, to behold beings enveloped in the mist of ignorance, immersed in depravity and wickedness, liable to a thousand accidents, exposed to the ravages of the earthquake, the volcano, and the storm; yet proud as Lucifer, and glorying in their shame! We should be apt to view them, as we now do those bedlamites, who fancy themselves to be kings, surrounded by their nobles, while they are chained to the walls of a noisome dungeon. "Sure pride was never made for man." How abhorrent, then, must it appear in the eyes of superior beings, who

have taken an expansive range through the field of creation? How abhorrent it is in the sight of the Almighty, and how amiable is the opposite virtue, we learn from his word:—"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."—"God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."—"Thus saith the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones."—While, therefore, we contemplate the omnipotence of God, in the immensity of creation, let us learn to cultivate humility and self-abasement. This was one of the lessons which the pious Psalmist deduced from his survey of the nocturnal heavens. When he beheld the moon walking in brightness, and the innumerable host of stars, overpowered with a sense of his own insignificance, and the greatness of divine condescension, he exclaimed, "O Lord! what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou shouldst visit him!"

Again, this subject is also calculated to inspire us with REVERENCE and VENERATION of God. Profound veneration of the Divine Being lies at the foundation of all religious worship and obedience. But, in order to venerate God aright, we must know him; and, in order to acquire the true knowledge of him, we must contemplate him through the medium of those works and dispensations, by which he displays the glories of his nature to the inhabitants of our world. I have already exhibited a few specimens of the stupendous operations of his power, in that portion of the system of the universe which lies open to our inspection; and there is surely, no mind in which the least spark of piety exists, but must feel strong emotions of reverence and awe, at the thought of that Almighty and Incomprehensible Being, who impels the huge masses of the planetary globes, with so amazing a rapidity through the sky, and who has diversified the voids of space with so vast an assemblage of magnificent worlds. Even those manifestations of Deity which are confined to the globe we inhabit, when attentively considered, are calculated to rouse, even the unthinking mind, to astonishment and awe. The lofty mountains, and expansive plains, the mass of water in the mighty ocean, the thunders rolling along the sky, the lightnings flashing from cloud to cloud, the hurricane and the tempest, the volcano vomiting rivers of fire, and the earthquake shaking kingdoms, and leveling cities with the ground —all proclaim the Majesty of Him, by whom the elements of

nature are arranged and directed, and seem to address the sons of men in language like this : " The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty ; at his wrath the earth trembles ; a fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies."—" Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him."

There is one reason, among others, why the bulk of mankind feel so little veneration of God, and that is, that they seldom contemplate, with fixed attention, " the operations of his hands." If we wish to cherish this sublime sentiment in our hearts, we must familiarize our minds to frequent excursions over all those scenes of Creation and Providence, which the volume of nature, and the volume of inspiration unfold to view. We must endeavour to assist our conceptions to the grandeur of these objects, by every discovery which has been, or may yet be made, and by every mode of illustration by which a sublime and comprehensive idea of the particular object of contemplation may be obtained.—If we would wish to acquire some definite, though imperfect conception of the physical extent of the universe, our minds might be assisted by such illustrations as the following :—Light flies from the sun with a velocity of nearly two hundred thousand miles in a moment of time, or, about 1,400,000 times swifter than the motion of a cannon ball : Suppose that one of the highest order of intelligences is endowed with a power of rapid motion superior to that of light, and with a corresponding degree of intellectual energy ; that he has been flying without intermission, from one province of creation to another, for six thousand years, and will continue the same rapid course for a thousand millions of years to come ; it is highly probable, if not absolutely certain, that, at the end of this vast tour, he would have advanced no farther than " the suburbs of creation"—and that all the magnificent systems of material and intellectual beings he had surveyed, during his rapid flight, and for such a length of ages, bear no more proportion to the whole Empire of Omnipotence, than the smallest grain of sand does to all the particles of matter of the same size contained in ten thousand worlds. Nor need we entertain the least fear, that the idea of the extent of the Creator's power, conveyed by such a representation, exceeds the bounds of reality. On the other hand, it must fall almost infinitely short of it. For, as the poet has justly observed—

" Can man *conceive* beyond what God can *do* ?"

Were a seraph, in prosecuting the tour of creation in the manner now stated, ever to arrive at a limit beyond which no

farther displays of the Divinity could be perceived, the thought would overwhelm his faculties with unutterable anguish and horror: he would feel, that he had now, in some measure, comprehended all the plans and operations of Omnipotence, and that no farther manifestation of the Divine glory remained to be explored. But we may rest assured, that this can never happen in the case of any created intelligence. We have every reason to believe, both from the nature of an Infinite Being, and from the vast extent of creation already explored, that the immense mass of material existence, and the endless variety of sensitive and intellectual beings with which the universe is replenished, are intended by Jehovah, to present to his rational offspring, a *shadow*, an *emblem*, or a *representation*, (in so far as finite extended existence can be a representation,) of the *Infinite Perfections* of his nature, which would otherwise have remained for ever impalpable to all subordinate intelligences.

In this manner, then, might we occasionally exercise our minds on the grand and diversified objects which the universe exhibits; and, in proportion as we enlarge the sphere of our contemplations, in a similar proportion will our views of God himself be extended, and a corresponding sentiment of veneration impressed upon the mind. For the soul of man cannot venerate a mere abstract being, that was never manifested through a sensible medium, however many lofty terms may be used to describe his perfections. It venerates that Ineffable Being, who conceals himself behind the scenes of Creation, through the medium of the visible displays he exhibits of his Power, Wisdom, and Beneficence, in the Economy of Nature, and in the Records of Revelation. Before the universe was formed, Jehovah existed alone, possessed of every attribute which he now displays. But, had only one solitary intelligence been created, and placed in the infinite void, without a material substratum beneath and around him, he could never have been animated with a sentiment of profound veneration for his Creator; because no objects existed to excite it, or to show, that his Invisible Maker was invested with those attributes which he is now known to possess. Accordingly, we find, in the sacred writings, that, when a sentiment of reverence is demanded from the sons of men, those sensible objects which are calculated to excite the emotion, are uniformly exhibited. "Fear ye not me? saith the Lord.—Will ye not tremble at my presence? who have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that is cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves,

yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it." "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? Thou art the true God, and an everlasting King.—Thou hast made the earth by thy power, thou hast established the world by thy wisdom, thou hast stretched out the heavens by thy discretion. When thou utterest thy voice there is a noise of waters in the heavens, thou causest the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, thou makest lightnings with rain, and bringest forth the winds out of thy treasures."*

But, however enlarged and venerable conceptions of God we may derive from the manifestations of his power, they must fall infinitely short of what is due to a being of boundless perfection. For there may be attributes in the Divine Essence, of which we cannot possibly form the least conception—attributes which cannot be shadowed forth or represented by any portion of the material or intellectual world yet discovered by us, or by all the mighty achievements by which human redemption was effected—attributes which have not been yet displayed, in their effects, to the highest orders of intelligent existence. And, therefore, as that excellent philosopher and divine, the honorable Mr. Boyle, has well observed—"Our ideas of God, however so great, will rather express the greatness of our veneration, than the Immensity of his Perfections; and the notions worthy of the most intelligent men, are far short of being worthy the incomprehensible God—the brightest idea we can frame of God being infinitely inferior, and no more than a *Parhelion*† in respect of the sun; for though that meteor is splendid, and resembles the sun, yet it resides in a cloud, and is not only much beneath the sun in distance, but inferior in bigness and splendor."

In short, were we habitually to cherish that profound veneration of God which his works are calculated to inspire, with what humility would we approach the presence of this August Being! with what emotions of awe would we present our adorations! and with what reverence would we talk of his inscrutable purposes, and incomprehensible operations! We would not talk about him, as some writers have done, with the same ease and indifference, as a mathematician would talk

* Jerem. x. 7—13.

† A *Parhelion* or *Mock-Sun*, is a meteor in the form of a very bright light appearing on one side of the sun, and somewhat resembling the appearance of that luminary. This phenomenon is supposed to be produced by the refraction and reflection of the sun's rays from a watery cloud.—Sometimes three or four of these parhelia, all of them bearing a certain resemblance to the real sun, have been seen at one time.

about the properties of a triangle, or a philosopher about the effects of a mechanical engine; nor would we treat, with a spirit of levity, any of the solemn declarations of his word, or the mighty movements of his providence. We would be ever ready to join with ardor in the sublime devotions of the inspired writers, "Great and marvellous, are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who would not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him."

Lastly, the views we have taken of the omnipotence and grandeur of the Deity are calculated *to inspire us with* HOPE *and* CONFIDENCE *in the prospect of that eternal existence which lies before us.* The period of our existence in this terrestrial scene will soon terminate, and those bodies through which we now hold a correspondence with the visible creation, crumbled into dust. The gradual decay, and the ultimate dissolution of human bodies, present a scene at which reason stands aghast; and, on a cursory survey of the chambers of the dead, it is apt to exclaim, in the language of despair, "Can these dry bones live?" A thousand difficulties crowd upon the mind which appear repugnant to the idea, that "beauty shall again spring out of the ashes, and life out of the dust." But, when we look abroad to the displays of Divine power and intelligence, in the wide expanse of Creation, we perceive that

> ——————"Almighty God
> Has done much more; nor is his arm impaired
> Through length of days.—And what he can, he will;
> His faithfulness stands bound to see it done."

We perceive that he has created systems in such vast profusion, that no man can number them. The worlds every moment under his superintendence and direction, are unquestionably far more numerous than all the human beings who have hitherto existed, or will yet exist till the close of time. And, if he has not only arranged the general features of each of these worlds, and established the physical laws, by which its economy is regulated, but has also arranged the diversified circumstances, and directs the minutest movements of the myriads of sensitive and intellectual existences it contains, we ought never, for a moment, to doubt, that the minutest particles of every human body, however widely separated from each other, and mingled with other extraneous substances, are known to him whose presence pervades all space; and that all the atoms requisite for the construction of the Resurrection-body will be re-assembled for this purpose "by the energy of

that mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." If we suppose that a number of human beings, amounting to three hundred thousand millions, shall start from the grave into new life, at the general resurrection, and that the atoms of each of these bodies are just now under the special superintendence of the Almighty—and that, at least an equal number of worlds are under his particular care and direction—the exertion of power and intelligence, in the former case, cannot be supposed to be greater that what is requisite in the latter. To a Being possessed of infinite power, conjoined with boundless Intelligence, the superintendence of countless atoms, and of countless worlds, is equally easy, where no contradiction is implied. For as the poet has well observed,—

> "He summons into being, with like ease,
> A whole creation, and a single grain."

And since this subject tends to strengthen our hope of a resurrection from the dead, it is also calculated to inspire us with confidence in the prospect of those eternal scenes which will burst upon the view, at the dissolution of all terrestrial things. Beyond the period fixed for the conflagration of this world, "a wide and unbounded prospect lies before us;" and though, at present, "shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it," yet the boundless magnificence of the Divine empire which science has unfolded, throws a radiance over the scenes of futurity, which is fraught with consolation in the view of "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds." It opens to us a prospect of perpetual improvement in knowledge and felicity; it presents a field in which the human faculties may be for ever expanding, for ever contemplating new scenes of grandeur rising to the view, in boundless perspective, through an interminable succession of existence. It convinces us that the happiness of the eternal state will not consist in an unvaried repetition of the same perceptions and enjoyments, but that new displays of the Creator's glory will be continually bursting on the astonished mind, world without end. And as we know the same beneficence and care which are displayed in the arrangement of systems of worlds, are also displayed in supporting and providing for the smallest microscopic animalculæ, we have no reason to harbor the least fear, lest we should be overlooked in the immensity of creation, or lost amidst the multiplicity of those works among which the Deity is incessantly employed; for, as he is Omnipresent and Omniscient, his care and influence must extend to every creature he has formed. There-

fore, though "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all the works therein be dissolved, yet, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

SECTION III.

On the Wisdom and Intelligence of the Deity.

In surveying the system of nature with a Christian and a Philosophic eye, it may be considered in different points of view. It may be viewed either as displaying the power and magnificence of the Deity, in the immense quantity of materials of which it is composed, and in the august machinery and movements by which its economy is directed;—or, as manifesting his Wisdom, in the nice adaptation of every minute circumstance to the end it was intended to accomplish;—or as illustrating his unbounded beneficence in the provision which is made for the accommodation and happiness of the numerous tribes of sentient and intelligent beings it contains. Having, in the preceding section, endeavored to exhibit some of those objects which evince the Omnipotence of Deity, and the pious emotions they are calculated to excite, I shall now offer a few popular illustrations of Divine Wisdom, as displayed in the arrangements of the material world—which shall chiefly be confined to those objects which are most prominent and obvious to the vulgar eye.

Wisdom is that perfection of an intelligent agent, by which he is enabled to select and employ the most proper means in order to accomplish a good and important end. It includes the idea of knowledge or intelligence, but may be distinguished from it. Knowledge is opposed to ignorance, wisdom is opposed to folly or error in conduct. As applied to God, it may be considered as comprehending the operations of his Omniscience and benevolence, or, in other words, his knowledge to discern, and his disposition to choose those means and ends which are calculated to promote the order and the happiness of the universe.

The Wisdom of God is, doubtless, displayed in every arrangement he has made throughout all the provinces of his immense and eternal kingdom, however far they may be removed from the sphere of human observation. But it is only

in those parts of the system of nature which lie open to our particular investigation, that the traces of this perfection can be distinctly perceived. The *Heavens* declare the glory of God's Wisdom, as well as of his Power. The planetary system—that portion of the heavens with which we are best acquainted—displays both the magnificence and the skill of its Divine Author,—in the magnitudes, distances, revolutions, proportions, and uses of the various globes of which it is composed, and in the diversified apparatus by which light and darkness are alternately distributed. The sun, an immense luminous world, by far the largest body in the system, is placed in the centre. No other position would have suited for an equable distribution of illumination and heat through the different parts of the system. Around him, at different distances, eleven primary planets revolve, accompanied with eighteen secondaries, or moons,—all in majestic order and harmony, no one interrupting the movements of another, but invariably keeping the paths prescribed them, and performing their revolutions in their appointed times. To all these revolving globes, the sun dispenses motion, light, heat, fertility, and other unceasing energies, for the comfort and happiness of their respective inhabitants—without which, perpetual sterility, eternal winter, and eternal night, would reign over every region of our globe, and throughout surrounding worlds.

The distance at which the heavenly bodies, particularly the sun, are placed from the earth, is a manifest evidence of Divine Wisdom. If the sun were much nearer us than he is at present, the earth, as now constituted, would be wasted and parched with excessive heat; the waters would be turned into vapor, and the rivers, seas, and oceans, would soon disappear, leaving nothing behind them but frightful barren dells and gloomy caverns; vegetation would completely cease, and the tribes of animated nature languish and die. On the other hand, were the sun much farther distant than he now is, or were his bulk, or the influence of his rays, diminished one half of what they now are, the land and the ocean would soon become one frozen mass, and universal desolation and sterility would overspread the fair face of nature, and, instead of a pleasant and comfortable abode, our globe would become a frightful desert, a state of misery and perpetual punishment.*

* It forms no objection to these remarks, that *caloric*, or the matter of *heat*, does not altogether depend upon the direct influence of the solar rays. The substance of caloric may be chiefly connected with the constitution of the globe we inhabit. But still, it is quite certain, that the earth, *as presently constituted*, would suffer effects most disastrous to sentient beings,

But herein is the wisdom of God displayed, that he has formed the sun of such a determinate size, and placed it at such a convenient distance, as not to annoy, but to refresh and cheer us, and to enliven the soil with its genial influence ; so that we plainly perceive, to use the language of the prophet, that "He hath established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his understanding."

The rotation of the several planetary globes around their axis, to produce the alternate succession of day and night, strikingly demonstrates the wisdom and benevolence of their great Author. Were the earth and the other planetary worlds destitute of a diurnal motion, only one half of their surfaces could be inhabited, and the other half would remain a dark and cheerless desert. The sun would be the only heavenly orb which would be recognized by the inhabitants of each respective world, as existing in the universe, and that scene of grandeur which night unfolds in the boundless expanse of the sky, would be for ever veiled from their view. For, it appears to be one grand design of the Creator, in giving these bodies a diurnal motion, not only to cheer their inhabitants with light and warmth, and the gay colouring produced by the solar rays ; but also to open to them a prospect of other portions of his vast dominions, which are dispersed in endless variety throughout the illimitable regions of space ; in order that they may acquire a more sublime impression of the glory of his kingdom, and of his eternal Power and Godhead. But, were perpetual day to irradiate the planets, it would throw an eternal and impenetrable veil over the glories of the sky, behind which, the magnificent operations of Jehovah's power would be, in a great measure, concealed. It is this circumstance which we should consider as the principal reason why a rotatory motion has been impressed on the planetary globes ; and not merely that a curtain of darkness might be thrown around their inhabitants, during the repose of sleep, as in the world in which we dwell. For, in some of the other planetary worlds belonging to our system, the intelligent beings with which they are peopled, may stand in no need of that nocturnal repose which is necessary for man ; their physical powers may be incapable of being impaired, and their mental energies may be

were it removed much nearer to, or much farther from the central luminary. Those planets which are removed several hundreds of millions of miles farther from the sun than our globe, may possibly experience a degree of heat much greater than ours ; but, in this case, the constitution of the solid parts of these globes, and of their surrounding atmospheres, must be very different from what obtains in the physical arrangements of our globe.

in perpetual exercise. And in some of those bodies which are surrounded with an assemblage of rings and moons, as the planet Saturn, the diversified grandeur of their celestial phenomena, in the absence of the sun, may present a scene of contemplation and enjoyment, far more interesting than all the splendours of their noon-day. Besides, had the planets no motion round their axis, and were both their hemispheres supposed to be peopled with inhabitants, their physical state and enjoyments would be as opposite to each other, as if they lived under the government of two distinct independent beings. While the one class was basking under the splendors of perpetual day, the other would be involved in all the horrors of an everlasting night. While the one hemisphere would be parched with excessive heat, the other would be bound in the fetters of eternal ice; and, in such a globe as ours, the motion of the tides, the ascent of the vapors, the currents of the atmosphere, the course of the winds, the benign influences of the rains and dews, and a thousand other movements which produce so many salutary and beneficial effects would be completely deranged. Hence we find that in all the planetary bodies on which observations can conveniently be made, a rotatory motion actually exists, in the secondary, as well as in the primary planets, and even in the sun himself, the centre, and the mover of the whole: in which arrangement of the Almighty Creator, the evidences of wisdom and design are strikingly apparent.

This amazing scene of Divine workmanship and skill, which the planetary system exhibits, we have reason to believe, is multiplied, and diversified, to an indefinite extent, throughout all the other systems of creation, displaying to the intelligences of every region, "the manifold wisdom of God." For there can be no question, that every star we now behold, either by the naked eye, or by the help of a telescope, is the centre of a system of planetary worlds, where the agency of God, and his unsearchable wisdom, may be endlessly varied, and, perhaps, more strikingly displayed than even in the system to which we belong. These vast globes of light could never have been designed merely to shed a few glimmering rays on our far distant world; for the ten thousandth part of them has never yet been seen by the inhabitants of the earth, since the Mosaic creation, except by a few astronomers of the past and the present age; and the light of many of them, in all probability, has never yet reached us; and perhaps never will, till the period of "the consummation of all terrestrial things." They were not made in vain; for such a sup-

position would be inconsistent with every idea we can form of the attributes of a Being of infinite perfection. They were not intended merely to diversify the voids of infinite space with a useless splendor, which has no relation to intellectual natures ; for this would give us a most distorted and inconsistent idea of the character of Him who is "the only wise God ;" and we are told, by an authority which cannot be questioned, that "by his wisdom he made the heavens, and stretched them out by his understanding." The only rational conclusion, therefore, which can be deduced, is, that they are destined to distribute illumination and splendor, vivifying influence, and happiness, among incalculable numbers of intelligent beings, of various degrees of physical, moral, and intellectual excellence. And, wherever the Creator has exerted his Almighty energies in the production of sensitive and intellectual natures, we may rest assured, that there also, his infinite wisdom and intelligence, in an endless variety of arrangements, contrivances, and adaptations, are unceasingly displayed.

But, after all, whatever evidences of contrivance and design the celestial globes may exhibit, it is not in the heavens that the most striking displays of Divine *wisdom* can be traced by the inhabitants of our world. It is only a few *general relations* and adaptations that can be distinctly perceived among the orbs of the firmament ; though, in so far as we are able to trace the purposes which they subserve, the marks of beauty, order, and design, are uniformly apparent. But we are placed at too great a distance from the orbs of heaven, to be able to investigate the particular arrangements which enter into the physical and moral economy of the celestial worlds. Were we transported to the surface of the planet Jupiter, and had an opportunity of surveying, at leisure, the regions of that vast globe, and the tribes of sensitive and intellectual existence which compose its population—of contemplating the relations of its moons to the pleasure and comfort of its inhabitants—the constitution of its atmosphere as to its reflective and refractive powers, in producing a degree of illumination to compensate for the great distance of that planet from the sun—its adaptation to the functions of animal life—the construction of the visual organs of its inhabitants, and the degree of sensibility they possess corresponding to the quantity of light received from the sun—the temperature of the surface and atmosphere of this globe corresponding to its distance from the central source of heat, and to the physical constitution of sensitive beings—in short, could we investigate the relations which inanimate nature, in all its varieties and sublimities, bears to

the necessities and the happiness of the animated existences that traverse its different regions, we should, doubtless, behold a scene of Divine Wisdom and intelligence, far more admirable and astonishing than even that which is exhibited in our sublunary world.—But since it is impossible for us to investigate the economy of other worlds, while we are chained down to this terrestrial sphere, we must direct our attention to those arrangements and contrivances in the constitution of our own globe, which lie open to our particular inspection, in order to perceive more distinctly the benevolent designs of Him "in whom we live and move, and have our being." And here an attentive observer will find, in almost every object, when minutely examined, a display of goodness and intelligence, which will constrain him to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God."

Wisdom, considered as consisting in contrivance, or the selection of the most proper means in order to accomplish an important end, may be exemplified and illustrated in a variety of familiar objects in the scene of nature.

The *earth* on which we tread, was evidently intended by the Creator to support man and other animals, along with their habitations, and to furnish those vegetable productions which are necessary for their subsistence; and, accordingly, he has given it that exact degree of consistency which is requisite for these purposes. Were it much harder than it now is; were it, for example, as dense as a rock, it would be incapable of cultivation, and vegetables could not be produced from its surface. Were it softer, it would be insufficient to support us, and we should sink at every step, like a person walking in a quagmire. Had this circumstance not been attended to in its formation, the earth would have been rendered useless as a habitable world, for all those animated beings which now traverse its surface. The exact adjustment of the solid parts of our globe to the nature and necessities of the beings which inhabit it, is, therefore, an instance, and an evidence of *Wisdom.*

The *diversity of surface* which it every where presents, in the mountains and vales with which it is variegated, indicates the same benevolent contrivance and design. If the earth were divested of its mountains, and its surface every where uniformly smooth, there would be no rivers, springs, or fountains; for water can flow only from a higher to a lower place; the vegetable tribes would droop and languish; man and other animals would be deprived of what is necessary for their existence and comfort: we should be destitute of many useful

stones, minerals, plants, and trees, which are now produced on the surface, and in the interior of mountains; the sea itself would become a stagnant marsh, or overflow the land; and the whole surface of nature in our terrestrial sphere, would present an unvaried scene of dull uniformity. Those picturesque and sublime scenes which fire the imagination of the poet, and which render mountainous districts so pleasing to the philosophic traveller, would be completely withdrawn; and all around, when compared with such diversified landscapes, would appear as fatiguing to the eye as the vast solitudes of the Arabian deserts, or the dull monotony of the ocean. But in consequence of the admirable distribution of hills and mountains over the surface of our globe, a variety of useful and ornamental effects is produced. Their lofty summits are destined by providence to arrest the vapors which float in the regions of the air; their internal cavities form so many spacious basins for the reception of waters distilled from the clouds; they are the original sources of springs and rivers, which water and fertilize the earth; they form immense magazines, in which are deposited stones, metals, and minerals, which are of so essential service in the arts that promote the comfort of human life; they serve for the production of a vast variety of herbs and trees; they arrest the progress of storms and tempests; they afford shelter and entertainment to various animals which minister to the wants of mankind: In a word, they adorn and embellish the face of nature—they form thousands of sublime and beautiful landscapes, and afford from their summits the most delightful prospects of the plains below. All these circumstances demonstrate the consummate wisdom of the Great Architect of nature, and lead us to conclude, that mountains, so far from being rude excrescences of nature, as some have asserted, form an essential part in the constitution, not only of our globe, but of all habitable worlds. And this conclusion is confirmed, so far as our observation extends, with regard to the moon, and several of the planetary bodies which belong to our system, whose surfaces are found to be diversified by sublime ramifications of mountain scenery; which circumstance forms one collateral proof, among many others, that they are the abodes of sentient and intellectual beings.

Again, the *coloring* which is spread over the face of nature indicates the wisdom of the Deity. It is essential to the present mode of our existence, and it was evidently intended by the Creator, that we should be enabled easily to recognize the forms and properties of the various objects with which we are surrounded. But were the objects of nature destitute of color,

or were the same unvaried hue spread over the face of creation, we should be destitute of all the entertainments of vision, and be at a loss to distinguish one object from another. We should be unable to distinguish rugged precipices from fruitful hills; naked rocks from human habitations; the trees from the hills that bear them, and the tilled from the untilled lands. "We should hesitate to pronounce whether an adjacent enclosure contain a piece of pasturage, a plot of arable land, or a field of corn; and it would require a little journey, and a minute investigation, to determine such a point. We could not determine whether the first person we met were a soldier in his regimentals, or a swain in his Sunday suit; a bride in her ornaments, or a widow in her weeds." Such would have been the aspect of nature, and such the inconveniences to which we should have been subjected, had God allowed us light, without the distinction of colors. We could have distinguished objects only by intricate trains of reasoning, and by circumstances of time, place, and relative position. And, to what delays and perplexities should we have been reduced, had we been obliged every moment to distinguish one thing from another by reasoning! Our whole life must then have been employed, rather in study than in action; and, after all, we must have remained in eternal uncertainty as to many things, which are now quite obvious to every one as soon as he opens his eyes. We could neither have communicated our thoughts by writing, nor have derived instruction from others through the medium of books: so that we should now have been almost as ignorant of the transactions of past ages, as we are of the events which are passing in the planetary worlds; and, consequently, we could never have enjoyed a written revelation from heaven, nor any other infallible guide to direct us in the path to happiness, if the Almighty had not distinguished the rays of light, and painted the objects around us with a diversity of colors,—so essentially connected are the minutest, and the most magnificent works of Deity. But now, in the present constitution of things, color characterizes the class to which every individual belongs, and indicates, upon the first inspection, its respective quality. Every object wears its peculiar livery, and has a distinguishing mark by which it is characterized.

The different hues which are spread over the scenery of the world, are also highly ornamental to the face of nature, and afford a variety of pleasures to the eye, and the imagination. It is this circumstance which adds a charm to the fields, the valleys, and the hills, the lofty mountain, the winding river

and the expansive lake; and which gives a splendor and sublimity to the capacious vault of heaven. Color is, therefore, an essential requisite to every world inhabited by sensitive beings; and we know, that provision has been made for diffusing it throughout all the globes which may exist in the distant regions which our telescopes have penetrated; for the light which radiates from the most distant stars is capable of being separated into the prismatic colors, similar to those which are produced by the solar rays; which furnishes a presumptive proof that they are intended to accomplish designs in their respective spheres analogous to those which light subserves in our terrestrial habitation,—or, in other words, that they are destined to convey to the minds of sentient beings, impressions of light and color, and, consequently, beings susceptible of such impressions must reside within the sphere, or more immediate influence of these far distant orbs.

The same benevolent design is apparent in the *general color which prevails throughout the scene of sublunary nature.* Had the fields been clothed with hues of a deep red, or a brilliant white, the eye would have been dazzled with the splendor of their aspect. Had a dark-blue, or a black color generally prevailed, it would have cast a universal gloom over the face of nature. But an agreeable green holds the medium between these two extremes, equally remote from a dismal gloom and excessive splendor, and bears such a relation to the structure of the eye, that it refreshes, instead of tiring it, and supports, instead of diminishing its force. At the same time, though one general color prevails over the landscape of the earth, it is diversified by an admirable variety of shades, so that every individual object in the vegetable world can be accurately distinguished from another; thus producing a beautiful and variegated appearance over the whole scenery of nature. "Who sees not in all these things, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?"

If from the earth we turn our attention to the *waters*, we shall perceive similar traces of the exquisite wisdom and skill of the Author of nature. Water is one of the most essential elementary parts in the constitution of our globe, without which the various tribes of beings which now people it could not exist. It supplies a necessary beverage to man, and to all the animals that people the earth and the air. It forms a solvent for a great variety of solid bodies; it is the element in which an infinitude of organized beings pass their existence; it acts an important part in conveying life and nourishment to all the tribes of the vegetable kingdom, and gives salubrity to the

atmospherical regions. Collected in immense masses in the basins of the sea, it serves as a vehicle for ships, and as a medium of communication between people of the most distant lands. Carried along with a progressive motion over the beds of streams and of rivers, it gives a brisk impulse to the air, and prevents the unwholesome stagnation of vapors; it receives the filth of populous cities, and rids them of a thousand nuisances. By its impulsion it becomes the mover of a multitude of machines; and, when rarified into steam, it is transformed into one of the most powerful and useful agents under the dominion of man. All which beneficial effects entirely depend on the exact degree of density, or specific gravity, which the Creator has given to its constituent parts. Had it been much more rarified than it is, it would have been altogether unfit to answer the purposes now specified; the whole face of the earth would have been a dry and barren waste; vegetable nature could not have been nourished; our floating edifices could not have been supported; the lightest bodies would have sunk, and all regular intercourse with distant nations would have been prevented. On the other hand, had its parts been much denser than they are; for example, had they been of the consistency of a thin jelly, similar disastrous effects would have inevitably followed; no ships could have ploughed the ocean; no refreshing beverage would have been supplied to the animal tribes; the absorbent vessels of trees, herbs and flowers, would have been unable to imbibe the moisture requisite for their nourishment; and we should thus have been deprived of all the beneficial effects we now derive from the use of that liquid element, and of all the diversified scenery of the vegetable world. But the configuration and consistency of its parts are so nicely adjusted to the constitution of the other elements, and to the wants of the sensitive and vegetable tribes, as exactly to subserve the ends intended in the system of nature.

Water has been ascertained to be a compound body formed by the union of two different kinds of air—oxygen and hydrogen. It has the property of becoming, in certain cases, much lighter than air; though, in its natural liquid state, it is 800 times heavier than that fluid; and has also the property of afterwards resuming its natural weight. Were it not for this property, evaporation could not be produced; and, consequently, no clouds, rain, nor dew, could be formed, to water and fertilize the different regions of the earth. But, in consequence of this wonderful property, the ocean becomes an inexhaustible cistern to our world. From its expansive sur-

face are exhaled those vapors which supply the rivers, and nourish the vegetable productions of every land. "The air and the sun," says an elegant writer, "constitute the mighty engine which works without intermission to raise the liquid treasures; while the clouds serve as so many aqueducts to convey them along the atmosphere, and distribute them, at seasonable periods, and in regular proportions, through all the regions of the globe."

Notwithstanding the properties now stated, *motion was still requisite*, to ensure all the advantages we now derive from the liquid element. Had the whole mass of waters been in a stagnant state, a thousand inconveniences and disastrous consequences would have inevitably ensued. But the All-Wise Creator has impressed upon its various masses a circulating motion, which preserves its purity, and widely extends its beneficial influence. The rills pour their liquid stores into the rivers; the rivers roll their watery treasures into the ocean; the waters of the ocean, by a libratory motion, roll backwards and forwards every twelve hours, and, by means of currents, and the force of winds, are kept in constant agitation. By the solar heat, a portion of these waters is carried up into the atmosphere, and, in the form of clouds, is conveyed by the winds over various regions; till, at last, it descends in rain and dew, to supply the springs "which run among the hills." So that there is a constant motion and circulation of the watery element, that it may serve as an agent for carrying forward the various processes of nature, and for ministering to the wants of man and beast.

In fine, were the waters in a state of perpetual stagnation, the filth of populous cities would be accumulated to a most unwholesome degree; the air would be filled with putrid exhalations, and the vegetable tribes would languish and die. Were they deprived of the property of being evaporated, (in which state they occupy a space 1400 times greater than in their liquid state,) rain and dew could never be produced, and the earth would be turned into "a dry and parched wilderness;" neither grass nor corn could be sufficiently dried to lay up for use; *our clothes, when washed, could never be dried;* and a variety of common operations, which now conduce to our convenience and comfort, could never be carried on. But the infinite wisdom of the Creator, foreseeing all the effects which can possibly arise from these principles of nature, has effectually provided against such disasters, by arranging all things, in number, weight, and measure, to subserve the

beneficial ends for which they were ordained. "He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst. By them the fowls of heaven are refreshed, which sing among the branches. He watereth the hills from his chambers, and the earth is satisfied with the fruit of his works."

Let us now attend to the *atmosphere*, in the constitution of which the wisdom of God is no less conspicuous than in the other departments of nature.

The atmosphere is one of the most essential appendages to the globe we inhabit, and exhibits a most striking scene of Divine skill and omnipotence. The term *atmosphere* is applied to the whole mass of fluids, consisting of air, vapors, electric fluid, and other matters, which surround the earth to a certain height. This mass of fluid matter gravitates to the earth, revolves with it in its diurnal rotation, and is carried along with it in its course round the sun every year. It has been computed to extend about 45 miles above the earth's surface, and it presses on the earth with a force proportioned to its height and density. From experiments made by the barometer, it has been ascertained, that it presses with a weight of about 15 pounds on every square inch of the earth's surface; and, therefore, its pressure on the body of a middle-sized man, is equal to about 32,000 lbs. or 14 tons avoirdupois, a pressure which would be insupportable, and even fatal, were it not equal in every part, and counterbalanced by the spring of the air within us. The pressure of the whole atmosphere upon the earth, is computed to be equivalent to that of a globe of lead 60 miles in diameter, or about 5,000,000,000,000,000 tons; that is, the whole mass of air which surrounds the globe, compresses the earth with a force or power equal to that of *five thousand millions of millions of tons*.* This amazing pressure is, however, essentially necessary for the preservation of the present constitution of our globe, and of the animated beings which dwell on its surface. It prevents the heat of the sun from converting water, and all other fluids on the face of the earth, into vapor; and preserves the vessels of all organized beings in due tone and vigor. Were the atmospherical pressure entirely removed, the elastic fluids contained in the finer vessels of men and other animals, would

* See Appendix, No. II.

inevitably burst them, and life would become extinct;* and most of the substances on the face of the earth, particularly liquids, would be dissipated into vapor.

The atmosphere is now ascertained to be a compound substance, formed of two very different ingredients, termed *oxygen* and *nitrogen gas*. Of 100 measures of atmospheric air 21 are oxygen, and 79 nitrogen. The one, namely, oxygen, is the principle of combustion, and the vehicle of heat, and is absolutely necessary for the support of animal life, and is the most powerful and energetic agent in nature. The other, is altogether incapable of supporting either flame or animal life. Were we to breathe oxygen air, without any mixture or alloy, our animal spirits would be raised, and the fluids in our bodies would circulate with greater rapidity; but we should soon infallibly perish by the rapid and unnatural accumulation of heat in the animal frame. If the nitrogen were extracted from the air, and the whole atmosphere contained nothing but oxygen, or vital air, combustion would not proceed in that gradual manner which it now does, but with the most dreadful and irresistible rapidity: not only wood and coals, and other substances now used for fuel, but even stones, iron, and other metallic substances, would blaze with a rapidity which would carry destruction through the whole expanse of nature. If even the proportions of the two airs were materially altered, a variety of pernicious effects would instantly be produced. If the oxygen were less in quantity than it now is, fire would lose its strength, candles would not diffuse a sufficient light, and animals would perform their vital functions with the utmost difficulty and pain. On the other hand, were the nitrogen diminished, and the oxygen increased, the air taken in by respiration would be more stimulent, and the circulation of the animal fluids would become accelerated; but the tone of the

* The necessity of the atmospherical pressure, for the comfort and preservation of animal life, might be illustrated by the effects experienced by those who have ascended to the summits of very high mountains, or who have been carried to a great height above the surface of the earth in balloons. Acosta, in his relation of a journey among the mountains of Peru, states, that "he and his companions were surprised with such extreme pangs of straining and vomiting, not without casting up of blood too, and with so violent a distemper, that they would undoubtedly have died had they remained two or three hours longer in that elevated situation." Count Zambeccari, and his companions, who ascended in a balloon, on the 7th of November, 1783, to a great height, found their hands and feet so swelled, that it was necessary for a surgeon to make incisions in the skin. In both the cases now stated, the persons ascended to so great a height, that the pressure of the atmosphere was not sufficient to counterbalance the pressure of the fluids of the body.

vessels thus stimulated to increased action, would be destroyed, by too great an excitement, and the body would inevitably waste and decay. Again, were the oxygen completely extracted from the atmosphere, and nothing but nitrogen remained, fire and flame would be extinguished, and instant destruction would be carried throughout all the departments of vegetable and animated nature. For a lighted taper will not burn for a single moment in nitrogen gas, and if an animal be plunged into it, it is instantly suffocated.

Again, not only the extraction of any one of the component parts of the atmosphere, or the alteration of their respective proportions, but even the slightest increase or diminution of their *specific gravity*, would be attended with the most disastrous effects. The nitrogen is found to be a little lighter than common air, which enables it to rise towards the higher regions of the atmosphere. In breathing, the air which is evolved from the lungs, at every expiration, consists chiefly of nitrogen, which is entirely unfit to be breathed again, and therefore rises above our heads before the next inspiration.—Now, had nitrogen, instead of being a little lighter, been a slight degree heavier than common air, or of the same specific gravity, it would have accumulated on the surface of the earth, and particularly in our apartments, to such a degree as to have produced diseases, pestilence, and death, in rapid succession. But being a little lighter than the surrounding air, it flies upwards, and we never breathe it again, till it enter into new and salutary combinations. Such is the benevolent skill which the Author of Nature has displayed, for promoting the comfort and preservation of every thing that lives.*

Farther, *were the air colored*, or were its particles much larger than they are, we could never obtain a distinct view of

* The necessity of atmospherical air for the support of life, was strikingly exemplified in the fate of the unhappy men who died in the *Black-hole* of Calcutta. On the 20th of June, 1756, about 8 o'clock in the evening, 146 men were forced, at the point of the bayonet, into a dungeon only 18 feet square. They had been but a few minutes confined in this infernal prison, before every one fell into a perspiration so profuse, that no idea can be formed of it. This brought on a raging thirst, the most difficult respiration, and an outrageous delirium. Such was the horror of their situation, that every insult that could be devised against the guard without, and all the opprobrious names that the Viceroy and his officers could be loaded with, were repeated, to provoke the guard to fire upon them, and terminate their sufferings. Before 11 o'clock the same evening, one-third of the men were dead; and before 6 next morning, only 23 came out alive, but most of them in a high putrid fever. All these dreadful effects were occasioned by the want of atmospheric air, and by their breathing a superabundant quantity of the nitrogen emitted from their lungs.

any other object. The exhalations which rise from the earth, being rendered visible, would disfigure the rich landscape of the universe, and render life disagreeable. But the Almighty, by rendering the air invisible, has enabled us not only to take a delightful and distinct survey of the objects that surround us, but has veiled from our view the gross humors incessantly perspired from animal bodies, the filth exhaled from kitchens, streets, and sewers, and every other object that would excite disgust. Again, *were the different portions of the atmosphere completely stationary*, and not susceptible of agitation, all nature would soon be thrown into confusion. The vapors which are exhaled from the sea by the heat of the sun would be suspended, and remain for ever fixed over those places from whence they arose. For want of this agitation of the air, which now scatters and disperses the clouds over every region, the sun would constantly scorch some districts, and be for ever hid from others ; the balance of nature would be destroyed ; navigation would be useless, and we could no longer enjoy the productions of different climates. In fine, were the atmosphere capable of being frozen, or converted into a solid mass, as all other fluids are, (and we know no reason why it should not be subject to congelation, but the will of the Creator,) the lives of every animal in the air, the waters, and the earth, would, in a few moments, be completely extinguished. But the admirable adjustment of every circumstance, in relation to this useful element, produces all the beneficial effects which we now experience, and strikingly demonstrates, that the Intelligent Contriver of all things is " wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

From the instances now stated, we may plainly perceive, that if the Almighty had not a particular regard to the happiness of his intelligent offspring, and to the comfort of every animated existence ; or, if he wished to inflict summary punishment on a wicked world, he could easily effect, by a very slight change in the constitution of the atmosphere, the entire destruction of the human race, and the entire conflagration of the great globe they inhabit,—throughout all its elementary regions. He has only to extract one of its constituent parts, and the grand catastrophe is at once accomplished. With what a striking propriety and emphasis, then, do the inspired writers declare, that, " In Him we live, and move, and have our being ;" and that " in His hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind !"

A great variety of other admirable properties is possessed by the atmosphere, of which I shall briefly notice only the fol

lowing :—It is the vehicle of *smells*, by which we become acquainted with the qualities of the food which is set before us, and learn to avoid those places which are damp, unwholesome, and dangerous. It is the medium of *sounds*, by means of which knowledge is conveyed to our minds. Its undulations, like so many couriers, run for ever backwards and forwards, to convey our thoughts to others, and theirs to us ; and to bring news of transactions which frequently occur at a considerable distance. A few strokes on a large bell, through the ministration of the air, will convey signals of distress, or of joy, in a quarter of a minute, to the population of a city containing a hundred thousand inhabitants. So that the air may be considered as the conveyer of the thoughts of mankind, which are the cement of society. It transmits to our ears all the harmonies of music, and expresses every passion of the soul : it swells the notes of the nightingale, and distributes alike to every ear the pleasures which arise from the harmonious sounds of a concert. It produces the blue color of the sky, and is the cause of the morning and the evening twilight, by its property of bending the rays of light, and reflecting them in all directions. It forms an essential requisite for carrying on all the processes of the vegetable kingdom, and serves for the production of clouds, rain, and dew, which nourish and fertilize the earth. In short, it would be impossible to enumerate all the advantages we derive from this noble appendage to our world. Were the earth divested of its atmosphere, or were only two or three of its properties changed or destroyed, it would be left altogether unfit for the habitation of sentient beings Were it divested of its undulating quality, we should be deprived of all the advantages of speech and conversation —of all the melody of the feathered songsters, and of all the pleasures of music ; and, like the deaf and dumb, we could have no power of communicating our thoughts but by visible signs. Were it deprived of its reflective powers, the sun would appear in one part of the sky of a dazzling brightness, while all around would appear as dark as midnight, and the stars would be visible at noon-day. Were it deprived of its refractive powers, instead of the gradual approach of the day and the night which we now experience, at sunrise, we should be transported all at once from midnight darkness to the splendor of noon-day : and, at sun-set, should make a sudden transition from the splendors of day to all the horrors of midnight, which would bewilder the traveller in his journey, and strike the creation with amazement. In fine, were the oxygen of the atmosphere completely extracted, destruction would seize

on all the tribes of the living world, throughout every region of earth, air, and sea.

Omitting at present the consideration of an indefinite variety of other particulars, which suggest themselves on this subject, I shall just notice one circumstance more, which has a relation both to the waters and to the atmosphere. It is a well known law of nature, that all bodies are expanded by heat, and contracted by cold. There is only one exception to this law which exists in the economy of our globe, and that is, *the expansion of water, in the act of freezing*.—While the parts of every other body are reduced in bulk, and their specific gravity increased by the application of cold; water, on the contrary, when congealed into ice, is increased in bulk, and becomes of a less specific gravity than the surrounding water, and, therefore, swims upon its surface. Now, had the case been otherwise; had water, when deprived of a portion of its heat, followed the general law of nature, and, like all other bodies, become specifically heavier than it was before, the present constitution of nature would have been materially deranged, and many of our present comforts, and even our very existence, would have been endangered. At whatever time the temperature of the atmosphere became reduced to 32° of the common thermometer, or to what is called the freezing point, the water on the surface of our rivers and lakes would have been converted into a layer of ice; this layer would have sunk to the bottom as it froze; another layer of ice would have been immediately produced, which would also have sunk to the former layer, and so on in succession, till, in the course of time, all our rivers from the surface to the bottom, and every other portion of water, capable of being frozen, would have been converted into solid masses of ice, which all the heat of summer could never have melted. We should have been deprived of most of the advantages we now derive from the liquid element, and, in a short time, the face of nature would have been transformed into a frozen chaos. But in the existing constitution of things, all such dismal effects are prevented, in consequence of the Creator having subjected the waters to a law contrary to that of other fluids, by means of which the frozen water swims upon the surface, and prevents the cold from penetrating to any great depth in the subjacent fluid; and when the heat of the atmosphere is increased, it is exposed to its genial influence, and is quickly changed into its former liquid state. How admirably, then, does this *exception* to the general law of nature display the infinite intelligence of the Great Contriver of all things, and his providential care for the

comfort of his creatures, when he arranged and established the economy of nature.

VARIETY OF NATURE.

As a striking evidence of Divine Intelligence, we may next consider the *immense variety which the Creator has introduced into every department of the material world.*

In every region on the surface of the globe, an endless multiplicity of objects, all differing from one another in shape, color, and motion, present themselves to the view of the beholder. Mountains covered with forests, hills clothed with verdure, spacious plains adorned with vineyards, orchards, and waving grain ; naked rocks, abrupt precipices, extended vales, deep dells, meandering rivers, roaring cataracts, brooks and rills ; lakes and gulfs, bays and promontories, seas and oceans, caverns and grottoes—meet the eye of the student of Nature, in every country, with a variety which is at once beautiful and majestic. Nothing can exceed the variety of the *vegetable kingdom*, which pervades all climates, and almost every portion of the dry land, and of the bed of the ocean. The immense collections of Natural History which are to be seen in the Museum at Paris, show, that botanists are already acquainted with nearly fifty-six thousand different species of plants.* And yet, it is probable, that these form but a very small portion of what actually exists, and that several hundreds of thousands of species remains to be explored by the industry of future ages. For, by far the greater part of the vegetable world still remains to be surveyed by the scientific botanist. Of the numerous tribes of vegetable nature which flourish in the interior of Africa and America, in the immense islands of New Holland, New Guinea, Borneo, Summatra, Java, Ceylon, Madagascar, and Japan ; in the vast regions of Tartary, Thibet, Siberia, and the Burman empire ; in the Phillippines, the Moluccas, the Ladrones, the Carolinas, the Marquesas, the Society, the Georgian, and in thousands of other Islands which are scattered over the Indian and Pacific oceans—little or nothing is known by the naturalists of Europe, and yet it is a fact which admits of no dispute, that every country hitherto explored, produces a variety of species of plants peculiar to itself; and those districts in Europe which have been frequently surveyed, present to every succeeding explorer a new field of investigation, and reward his industry with new discoveries of the beauties and varieties of the vegetable kingdom. It has been conjectured by some Naturalists, on the

* Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, July, 1822, p. 48.

ground of a multitude of observations, that "there is not a square league of earth, but what presents some one plant peculiar to itself, or, at least, which thrives there better, or appears more beautiful than in any other part of the world." This would make the number of species of vegetables to amount to as many millions as there are of square leagues on the surface of the earth.

Now, every one of these species of plants differs from another, in its size, structure, form, flowers, leaves, fruits, mode of propagation, color, medicinal virtues, nutritious qualities, internal vessels, and the odors it exhales. They are of all sizes, from the microscopic mushroom, invisible to the naked eye, to the sturdy oak, and the cedar of Lebanon,and from the slender willow to the Banian tree, under whose shade 7000 persons may find ample room to repose. A thousand different shades of color distinguish the different species. Every one wears its peculiar livery, and is distinguished by its own native hues; and many of their inherent beauties can be distinguished only by the help of the microscope. Some grow upright, others creep along in a serpentine form. Some flourish for ages, others wither and decay in a few months; some spring up in moist, others in dry soils; some turn towards the sun, others shrink and contract when we approach to touch them. Not only are the different species of plants and flowers distinguished from each other, by their different forms, but even the different individuals of the same species. In a bed of tulips or carnations, for example, there is scarcely a flower in which some difference may not be observed in its structure, size, or assemblage of colors; nor can any two flowers be found in which the shape and shades are exactly similar. Of all the hundred thousand millions of plants, trees, herbs, and flowers, with which our globe is variegated, there are not, perhaps, two individuals precisely alike, in every point of view in which they may be contemplated; yea, there is not, perhaps, a single leaf in the forest, when minutely examined, that will not be found to differ, in certain aspects, from its fellows. Such is the wonderful and infinite diversity with which the Creator has adorned the vegetable kingdom.

His wisdom is also evidently displayed in this vast profusion of vegetable nature—in adapting each plant to the soil and situation in which it is destined to flourish—in furnishing it with those vessels by which it absorbs the air and moisture on which it feeds—and in adapting it to the nature and necessities of animated beings. As the earth teems with animated existence, and as the different tribes of animals depend chiefly on

the productions of the vegetable kingdom for their subsistence, so there is an abundance and a variety of plants adapted to the peculiar constitutions of every individual species. This circumstance demonstrates, that there is a pre-contrived relation and fitness between the internal *constitution* of the animal, and the *nature of the plants* which afford it nourishment; and shows us, that the animal and vegetable kingdoms are the workmanship of *one* and the same Almighty Being, and that, in his arrangements with regard to the one, he had in view the necessities of the other.

When we direct our attention to the tribes of *animated nature*, we behold a scene no less variegated and astonishing. Above fifty thousand species of animals have been detected and described by Naturalists, besides several thousands of species which the naked eye cannot discern, and which people the invisible regions of the waters and the air. And, as the greate part of the globe has never yet been thoroughly explored, several hundreds, if not thousands, of species unknown to the scientific world, may exist in the depths of the ocean, and in the unexplored regions of the land. All these species differ from one another in color, size, and shape; in the internal structure of their bodies, in the number of their sensitive organs, limbs, feet, joints, claws, wings, and fins; in their dispositions, faculties, movements, and modes of subsistence. They are of all sizes, from the mite and the gnat, up to the elephant and the whale, and from the mite downwards to those invisible animaculæ, a hundred thousand of which would not equal a grain of sand. Some fly through the atmosphere, some glide through the waters, others traverse the solid land. Some walk on two, some on four, some on twenty, and some on a hundred feet. Some have eyes furnished with two, some with eight, some with a hundred, and some with eight thousand distinct transparent globes, for the purpose of vision.*

* The *eyes* of beetles, silk-worms, flies, and several other kinds of insects, are among the most curious and wonderful productions of the God of Nature. On the head of a fly are two large protuberances, one on each side; these constitute its organs of vision. The whole surface of these protuberances is covered with a multitude of small hemispheres placed with the utmost regularity in rows, crossing each other in a kind of lattice work. These little hemispheres have each of them a minute transparent convex lens in the middle, each of which has a distinct branch of the optic nerve ministering to it; so that the different lenses may be considered as so many distinct eyes. Mr. Leeuwenhoek counted 6236 in the two eyes of a silk worm, when in its *fly* state; 3180 in each eye of the beetle; and 8000 in the two eyes of a *common fly*. Mr. Hook reckoned 14,000 in the eyes of a *drone fly;* and, in one of the eyes of a *dragon fly*, there have been reckoned 13,500 of these lenses, and, consequently, in both eyes, 27,000, every one

Our astonishment at the variety which appears in the animal kingdom is still farther increased when we consider not only the diversities which are apparent in their external aspect, but also in their internal structure and organization. When we reflect on the thousands of movements, adjustments, adaptations, and compensations, which are requisite in order to the construction of an animal system, for enabling it to form its intended functions ;—when we consider, that every species of animals has a system of organization peculiar to itself, consisting of bones, joints, blood vessels, and muscular motions, differing in a variety of respects from those of any other species, and exactly adapted to its various necessities and modes of existence ; and when we consider, still farther, the incomprehensibly delicate contrivances, and exquisite borings, polishings, claspings, and adaptations, which enter into the organization of an animated being ten thousand times less than a mite ; and that the different species of these animals are likewise all differently organized from one another,—we cannot but be struck with reverence and astonishment, at the *Intelligence* of that Incomprehensible Being who arranged the organs of all the tribes of animated nature, who "breathed into them the breath of life," and who continually upholds them in all their movements !

Could we descend into the subterraneous apartments of the globe, and penetrate into those unknown recesses which lie towards its centre, we should, doubtless, behold a variegated scene of wonders, even in those dark and impenetrable regions. But all the labor and industry of man have not hitherto enabled him to penetrate farther into the bowels of the earth than the six thousandth part of its diameter ; so that we must remain for ever ignorant of the immense caverns and masses of matter that may exist, and of the processes that may be going on about its central regions. In those re-

of which is capable of forming a distinct image of any object, in the same manner as a common convex glass ; so that there are 27,000 images formed on the retina of this little animal. Mr. Leeuwenhoek having prepared the eye of a fly for the purpose, placed it a little farther from his microscope than when he would examine an object, so as to leave a proper local distance between it and the lens of his microscope ; and then looked through both, in the manner of a telescope, at the steeple of the church, which was 299 feet high, and 750 feet distant, and could plainly see through every little lens, the whole steeple inverted, though not larger than the point of a fine needle : and then directing it to a neighbouring house, saw through many of these little hemispheres, not only the front of the house, but also the doors and windows, and could discern distinctly, whether the windows were open or shut. Such an exquisite piece of Divine mechanism transcends all human comprehension.

gions, however, near the surface, which lie within the sphere of human inspection, we perceive a variety analogous to that which is displayed in the other departments of nature. Here we find substances of various kinds formed into strata, or layers, of different depths—earths, sand, gravel, marl, clay, sandstone, free-stone, marble, lime-stone, fossils, coals, peat, and similar materials. In these strata are found metals and minerals of various descriptions—salt, nitrate of potash, ammonia, sulphur, bitumen, platina, gold, silver, mercury, iron, lead, tin, copper, zinc, nickel, manganeze, cobalt, antimony, the diamond, rubies, sapphires, jaspers, emeralds, and a countless variety of other substances, of incalculable benefit to mankind. Some of these substances are so essentially requisite for the comfort of man, that, without them, he would soon degenerate into the savage state, and be deprived of all those arts which extend his knowledge, and which cheer and embellish the abodes of civilized life.

If we turn our eyes upward to the regions of the atmosphere, we may also behold a spectacle of variegated magnificence. Sometimes the sky is covered with sable clouds, or obscured with mists ; at other times it is tinged with a variety of hues, by the rays of the rising or the setting sun. Sometimes it presents a pure azure, at other times it is diversified with strata of dappled clouds. At one time we behold the rainbow rearing its majestic arch, adorned with all the colors of light; at another, the Aurora Borealis illuminating the sky with its fantastic corruscations. At one time we behold the fiery meteor sweeping through the air ; at another, we perceive the forked lightning darting from the clouds, and hear the thunders rolling through the sky. Sometimes the vault of heaven appears like a boundless desert, and at other times adorned with an innumerable host of stars, and with the moon "walking in brightness." In short, whether we direct our view to the vegetable or the animal tribes, to the atmosphere, the ocean, the mountains, the plains, or the subterranean recesses of the globe, we behold a scene of beauty, order and *variety*, which astonishes and enraptures the contemplative mind, and constrains us to join in the devout exclamations of the Psalmist, "*How manifold are thy works*, O Lord! In wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches ; so is the great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping, *innumerable*, both small and great beasts."

This countless variety of objects which appears throughout every department of our sublunary system, not only displays the depths of Divine wisdom, but also presents us with a faint

idea of the *infinity* of the Creator, and of the *immense multiplicity of ideas and conceptions* which must have existed in the Eternal Mind, when the fabric of our globe, and its numerous tribes of inhabitants were arranged and brought into existence. And, if every other world which floats in the immensity of space, be diversified with a similar variety of existence, altogether different from ours, (as we have reason to believe, from the variety we already perceive, and from the boundless plans and conceptions of the Creator,) the human mind is lost and confounded, when it attempts to form an idea of those endlessly diversified plans, conceptions, and views, which must have existed during an eternity past, in the Divine mind. When we would attempt to enter into the conception of so vast and varied operations, we feel our own littleness, and the narrow limits of our feeble powers, and can only exclaim, with the Apostle Paul, " O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his coun cils, and his ways of creation and providence past finding out."

This characteristic of variety, which is stamped on all the works of Omnipotence, is, doubtless, intended to gratify the principle of curiosity, and the love of novelty, which are implanted in the human breast; and thus to excite rational be ings to the study and investigation of the works of the Creator; that therein they may behold the glory of the Divine character, and be stimulated to the exercise of love, admira tion, and reverence. For, as the records of revelation, and the dispensations of Providence, display to us the various aspects of the moral character of Deity, so, the diversified phenomena, and the multiplicity of objects and operations which the scenery of nature exhibits, present to us a specimen of the *ideas*, as it were, of the Eternal Mind, in so far as they can be adumbrated by material objects, and exhibited to mortals, through the medium of corporeal organs.

To convey an adequate conception of the *number* of these ideas, as exhibited on the globe in which we live, would baffle the arithmetician's skill, and set his numbers at defiance.— We may, however, assist our conceptions a little, by confining our attention to one department of nature; for example, the Animal Kingdom. The number of the different species of animals, taking into account those which are hitherto undiscovered, and those which are invisible to the naked eye, cannot be estimated at less than 300,000. In a human body there are reckoned about 446 muscles, in each of which, according to anatomists, there are at least 10 several intentions, or due qualifications to be observed—its proper figure, its just

magnitude, the right disposition of its several ends, upper and lower, the position of the whole, the insertion of its proper nerves, veins, arteries, &c. so that in the muscular system alone, there are 4,460 several ends or aims to be attended to. The bones are reckoned to be in number about 245, and the distinct scopes or intentions of each of these are above 40 ; in all, about 9,800 ; so that the system of bones and muscles alone, without taking any other parts into consideration, amounts to above 14,000 different intentions or adaptations. If now, we suppose, that all the species of animals above stated, are differently constructed, and, taken one with another, contain at an average, a system of bones and muscles as numerous as in the human body—the number of species must be multiplied by the number of different aims or adaptations, and the product will amount to 4,200,000,000. If we were next to attend to the many thousands of blood vessels in an animal body, and the numerous ligaments, membranes, humors, and fluids of various descriptions—the skin, with its millions of pores, and every other part of an organical system, with the aims and intentions of each, we should have another sum of many hundreds of millions to be multiplied by the former product, in order to express the diversified ideas which enter into the construction of the animal world. And, if we still farther consider, that of the hundreds of millions of individuals belonging to each species, no two individuals exactly resemble each other—that all the myriads of vegetables with which the earth is covered, are distinguished from each other, by some one characteristic or another, and that every grain of sand contained in the mountains, and in the bed of the ocean, as shown by the microscope, discovers a different form and configuration from another—we are here presented with an *image* of the *infinity* of the *conceptions* of Him in whose incomprehensible mind they all existed, during countless ages, before the universe was formed.

To overlook this amazing scene of Divine Intelligence, or to consider it as beneath our notice, as some have done—if it be not the characteristic of impiety, is at least, the mark of a weak and undiscriminating mind. The man who disregards the visible displays of Infinite wisdom, or who neglects to investigate them, when opportunity offers, acts as if he considered himself already possessed of a sufficient portion of intelligence, and stood in no need of sensible assistances to direct his conceptions of the Creator. Pride, and false conceptions of the nature and design of true religion, frequently lie at the foundation of all that indifference and neglect with which the

visible works of God are treated, by those who make pretensions to a high degree of spiritual attainments. The truly pious man will trace, with wonder and delight, the footsteps of his Father and his God, wherever they appear in the variegated scene of creation around him, and will be filled with sorrow, and contrition of heart, that, amidst his excursions and solitary walks, he has so often disregarded "the works of the Lord, and the operation of his hands."

In fine, the variety which appears on the face of nature, not only enlarges our conceptions of Infinite Wisdom, but is also the foundation of all our discriminations and judgments as rational beings, and is of the most essential utility in the affairs of human society. Such is the variety of which the features of the human countenance are susceptible, that it is probable that no two individuals, of all the millions of the race of Adam, that have existed since the beginning of time, would be found to resemble each other. We know no two human beings presently existing, however similar to each other, but may be distinguished either by their stature, their forms, or the features of their faces; and on the ground of this dissimilarity, the various wheels of the machine of society move onward, without clashing or confusion. Had it been otherwise—had the faces of men, and their organs of speech been cast exactly in the same mould, as would have been the case, had the world been framed according to the Epicurean system, by blind chance directing a concourse of atoms, it might have been as difficult to distinguish one human countenance from another, as to distinguish the eggs laid by the same hen, or the drops of water which trickle from the same orifice; and, consequently, society would have been thrown into a state of universal anarchy and confusion. Friends would not have been distinguished from enemies, villains from the good and honest, fathers from sons, the culprit from the innocent person, nor the branches of the same family from one another. And what a scene of perpetual confusion and disturbance would thus have been created! Frauds, thefts, robberies, murders, assassinations, forgeries, and injustice of all kinds, might have been daily committed without the least possibility of detection.—Nay, were even the *variety of tones* in the human voice, peculiar to each person, to cease, and the *handwriting* of all men to become perfectly uniform, a multitude of distressing deceptions and perplexities would be produced in the domestic, civil, and commercial transactions of mankind. But the All-wise and Beneficent Creator has prevented all such evils and inconveniences, by the character of *variety*

which he has impressed on the human species ; and on all his works. By the peculiar features of his countenance every man may be distinguished in the light ; by the tones of his voice he may be recognized in the dark, or when he is separated from his fellows by an impenetrable partition ; and his hand-writing can attest his existence and individuality, when continents and oceans interpose between him and his relations, and be a witness of his sentiments and purposes to future generations.

Thus, I have taken a very cursory view of some evidences of Divine Wisdom, which appear in the general constitution of the *earth*, the *waters*, and the *atmosphere*, and in the characteristic of *variety*, which is impressed on all the objects of the visible creation. When these and other admirable arrangements, in our sublunary system, are seriously contemplated, every rational and pious mind will be disposed to exclaim with the Psalmist—" There is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works."—" Thou art great, and dost wondrous things, thou art God alone."—" O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works towards the children of men !"

When we consider not only the *utility*, but the *beauty* and *grandeur* of the wise arrangements of nature, what reason have we to admire and adore the goodness of the great Author of our existence ! Were all the diversities of shape and color, of mountains and vales, of rivers and lakes, of light and shade, which now embellish the various landscapes of the world, to disappear, and were one unvaried scene perpetually to present itself to the eye, how dull and wearisome, and uninteresting would the aspect of the universe appear to an intelligent mind ! Although the variegated beauties which adorn the surface of our globe, and the vault of heaven, are not essential to our existence, as sensitive beings, yet, were they completely withdrawn, and nothing presented to the eye, but a boundless expanse of barren sands, the mind would recoil upon itself, its activity would be destroyed, its powers would be confined, as it were, to a prison, and it would roam in vain amidst the surrounding waste, in search of enjoyment. Even the luxuries of a palace, were it possible to procure them amidst such a scene of desolation, would become stale and insipid, and would leave the rational soul, almost destitute of ideas and of mental energy, to the tiresome round of a

cheerless existence. But in the actual state of the world we live in, there is no landscape in nature, from the Icebergs of Greenland to the verdant scenes of the Torrid Zone, in which objects, either of sublimity or of beauty, in boundless variety, are not presented to the view ; in order to stimulate the mind to activity, to gratify its desire of novelty, and to elevate its conceptions of the Beneficent Creator.

And, if the present constitution of our world displays so evident marks of beauty and benevolent design, now that it is inhabited by an assemblage of depraved intelligences, and its physical aspect deformed, in consequence of "the wickedness of man"—what transporting beauties and sublimities must it have presented, when it appeared fresh from the hand of its Almighty Maker, and when all things were pronounced by him to be *very good?* After a deluge of waters has swept many of its primeval beauties, and has broken and deranged even its subterraneous strata, this terrestrial world still presents to the eye a striking scene of beauty, order, and beneficence. But we have the strongest reason to believe, that, before sin had disfigured the aspect of this lower world, all was "beauty to the eye, and music to the ear"—that "immortality breathed in the winds, flowed in the rivers," and exhaled from every plant and flower. No storms disturbed the tranquillity of nature, nor created the least alarm in the breasts of its holy inhabitants. No earthquakes shook the ground, nor rent the foundations of nature. No volcanoes vomited their rivers of lava, nor overwhelmed the plains with deluges of fire.—No barren deserts of heath and sand disfigured the rich landscape of the world—no tempests nor hurricanes tossed the ocean, nor scorching heats, nor piercing colds, nor pestilence, nor disease, annoyed the human frame.—In the paradisaical state of the world, we may reasonably suppose, that all the elements of nature contributed directly to the pleasure and enjoyment of man, and of the other tribes of animated nature ; and that they were not subjected, as they now are, to the operation of those natural agents which so frequently spread destruction and ruin among the abodes of men. To suppose the contrary to have happened, would be inconsistent with the state of pure and happy intelligences, and with the benignity of the Creator ; and would imply, that God was either unwilling, or unable to remove such physical evils. But we cannot suppose it beyond the limits of Infinite Wisdom and Omnipotence, to create and arrange a world entirely free from those evils and inconveniences which now flow from the operation of certain physical agents ; without, at the same

time, supposing that his power and intelligence are confined within certain bounds, beyond which they cannot pass. And, therefore, if, in the existing constitution of things, the harmony of nature is occasionally disturbed, and its beauty defaced, by earthquakes, storms, and tempests—we must remember, that the inhabitants of the earth are now a depraved race of mortals, no longer adorned with primeval purity and innocence; and that the physical economy of our globe has undergone a certain derangement, corresponding to the *moral state* of its present occupants.—But since this earth, even in its present state of degradation and derangement, presents to the view of every beholder so many objects of beauty and magnificence, and so numerous traces of Divine Beneficence—we may reasonably conclude, that scenes of Divine Wisdom and Goodness, far more glorious and transporting, must be displayed in those worlds where moral evil has never shed its malign influence, and where the inhabitants—superior to disease and death—bask for ever in the regions of immortality. And, therefore, however admirable the displays of Divine Wisdom may appear in the sublunary scene around us, they must be considered as inferior to those which are exhibited in many other provinces of Jehovah's empire, in so far as they are blended with those physical derangements which indicate his displeasure against the sins of men.

Were we now to direct our attention to the mechanism of animated beings, and to consider the numberless contrivances and adaptations in their organical structure and functions, a thousand instances of exquisite wisdom and design, still more striking and admirable, would crowd upon our view. For, although the general fabric of the world, and the immense variety of objects it contains, are evident proofs of a Wise and Intelligent Contriver, yet it is chiefly in the minute and delicate contrivances of organical structures, their adaptation to the purposes of life, motion, and enjoyment, and their relation and correspondence to the surrounding elements, that the consummate skill of the Great Architect of nature is most strikingly perceived. But as it forms no part of my present plan to enter on so extensive a field of illustration, on which volumes might be written, I shall content myself with merely stating an example or two. My first example shall be taken from

THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN EYE.

The eye is one of the nicest pieces of mechanism which the human understanding can contemplate; but as it requires a

knowledge of its anatomical structure, and of the principles of optics, to enable us to appreciate its admirable functions, I shall confine myself to a few *general* descriptions and remarks.

The eye is nearly of a globular form. It consists chiefly of three *coats*, and three *humours*. The first or outer coat, is termed *Sclerotica;* it is every where white and opaque, and is joined at its anterior edge to another which has more convexity than any other part of the globe of the eye, and, being exceedingly transparent, is called the *Cornea*. These two parts are perfectly different in their structure, and are supposed, by some anatomists, to be as distinct from each other as the glass of a watch is from the case into which it is fixed.—Next within this coat is that called the *Choroides*, on account of its being furnished with a great number of vessels. It serves, as it were, for a lining to the other, and is joined with that part of the eye termed *iris*. The *iris* is an opaque membrane like the choroides, but of different colors in different eyes, as grey, black, or hazel. It is composed of two sets of muscular fibres, the one of a circular form, which contracts the hole in the middle, called the *pupil*, when the light is too strong for the eye; and the other of radial fibres, tends every where from the circumference of the iris towards the middle of the pupil; which fibres, by their contractions, dilate and enlarge the pupil, when the light is weak, in order to let in more of its rays.—The third coat is called the *retina* upon which are painted the images of all visible objects, by the rays of light which flow from them. It spreads like net-work all over the inside of the choroides, and is nothing more than a fine expansion of the optic nerve; by which nerve the impressions of visible objects are conveyed to the brain.

The inside of the globe of the eye, within these tunics or coats, is filled with three humors, called the aqueous, the crystalline, and the vitreous. The *aqueous* humour lies at the forepart of the eye, and occupies all the space between the crystalline and the prominent cornea. It has the same specific gravity and refractive power as water, and seems chiefly of use to prevent the crystalline from being easily bruised by rubbing, or by a blow—and perhaps it serves for the crystalline humour to move forward in, while we view near objects; and backward, for remoter objects; without which, or some other, mechanism, effecting the same purpose we could not, according to the laws of optics, perceive objects distinctly, when placed at different distances.—Behind the aqueous lies the *crystalline* humour, which is shaped like a double

convex glass, and is a little more convex on the back, than on the fore-part. This humour is transparent like crystal, is nearly of the consistence of hard jelly, and converges the rays which pass through it, from visible objects, to its focus at the bottom, or back part of the eye.—The *vitreous* humour lies behind the crystalline, and fills up the greatest part of the orb of the eye, giving it a globular shape. It is nearly of the consistence of the white of an egg, and very transparent; its fore-part is concave, for the crystalline humour to lodge in, and its back part being convex, the retina is spread over it. It serves as a medium to keep the crystalline humour and the retina at due distance. From what has now been stated, it is obvious, that the images of external objects are depicted in the retina, in an inverted position, in the same manner as the images formed by a common convex lens; but how the mind, in this case, perceives objects erect, is a question, about which the learned have divided in their opinions.*

The ball of the eye, as now described, is situated in a bony cavity, called its orbit, composed by the junction of seven different bones, hollowed out at their edges. This cavity is in all the vacant spaces filled with a loose fat, which serves as a proper medium for the eye to rest in, and as a socket in which it may move. It is sheltered by the eye-brows, which are provided with hair, to prevent the descending sweat of the forehead from running down into it. As a still farther protection to this delicate organ, it is furnished with the eye-lid, which like a curtain, is drawn over it with inconceivable swiftness, for its security, on the approach of danger. It also serves to wipe it from superfluous moisture, and to cover it during sleep. In the upper part of its orbit, it is furnished with a gland, to supply it with water sufficient to wash off dust, and to keep its outer surface moist, without which the cornea would be less transparent, and the rays of light would be disturbed in their passage; and the superfluous water is conveyed to the nose through a perforation in the bone.

For the purpose of enabling the eye to move in its socket, *six muscles* are provided. These are admirably contrived to move it in every direction, upwards or downwards, to the right, or to the left, or in whatever direction the occasion may require; and thus we are spared the trouble of turning our heads continually towards the objects we wish to inspect. If we

* An idea of the relative positions of the *coats* and *humours* described above, may be obtained by a simple inspection of the Plate, Fig. 6.—Fig. 5, represents a *front view* of the human eye, as it appears in its natural state, and exhibits the relative positions of the *Cornea*, *Iris*, and *Pupil*.

want to look upward, one of these muscles lifts up the orb of the eye; if we would cast our eyes to the ground, another muscle pulls them down. A third muscle moves the globe outwards towards the temples, and a fourth draws it towards the nose. A fifth, which slides within a cartilaginous ring, like a cord over a pulley, and is fastened to the globe of the eye in two points, makes it roll about at pleasure. A sixth lies under the eye, and is designed to temper and restrain, within proper bounds, the action of the rest, to keep it steadily fixed on the object it beholds, and to prevent those frightful contortions which otherwise might take place. By these, and a multitude of other mechanical contrivances, all acting in harmonious combination, the eye, as a natural telescope and microscope, is made to advance, to recede, to move to the right, and to the left, and in every other direction; and to view near and distant objects with equal distinctness; so that a single eye, by the variety of positions it may assume, performs the office of a thousand.*

The utility of these several movements, and the pain and inconvenience which would be suffered, were any of them wanting, can scarcely be conceived, by any one whose eyes have always remained in a sound state. We are so much accustomed to the regular exercise of our visual organs, that we seldom reflect on the numerous delicate springs which must be set in action, before the functions of vision can, with ease, be performed. But were any one of the muscular organs, now described, to fail in its functions, we should soon experience so many inconveniences, as would throw a gloom on all the other comforts of life; and convince us, how much we are indebted, every moment, to the provident care and goodness of our Beneficent Creator, for thousands of enjoyments which we seldom think of, and for which we are never sufficiently grateful.—"With much compassion, as well as astonishment, at the goodness of our loving Creator," says Dr. Nieuwentyt, "have I considered the sad state of a certain gentleman, who, as to the rest, was in pretty good health, but only wanted the use of those two little muscles that serve to lift up the eyelid, and so had almost lost the use of his sight—being forced, as long as this defect lasted, to shove up his eyelids every moment, with his own hands."†

How admirable, then, is the formation of the eye, and how

* Flies and other insects, whose eyes are immoveable, have several thousands of distinct globes in each eye. See note page 80.

† Nieuwentyt's Religious Philosopher, vol. 1. p. 232

grateful ought we to feel at the consideration, that we are permitted to enjoy all the transporting pleasures of vision, without the least perplexity or effort on our part! If the loss of action in a single muscle produces so many distressing sensations and efforts, what would be the consequence if all the muscles of the eye were wanting or deranged? And, is it man that governs these nice and intricate movements? Or is it the eye itself, as a self-directing machine, that thus turns around, seasonably and significantly, towards every visible object? Man knows neither the organs of vision, nor the functions they ought to perform. The eye is only an unconscious machine, in the hands of a Superior Intelligence, as a watch, or a steam engine, is in the hands of a mechanic. It is God alone who constantly performs its movements, according to certain laws, which he has submitted to our inclinations and desires; "*for in him we live and move.*"—We are *desirous* to see certain objects around us: this is all the share we have in the operations of our eyes; and without perplexing our understanding, without the least care or management, in regard to any of the functions, we can, in a few moments, take a survey of the beauties and sublimities of an extensive landscape, and of the glories of the vault of heaven. Thus, the Divine Being operates not only in this, but in a thousand different ways, in the various senses and contrivances which belong to our animal system; and yet, thoughtless and ungrateful man often inquires, in the language of doubt and hesitation, "Where is God my Maker?"—He is in us, and around us, directing every movement in our animal frame to act in harmony with the surrounding elements, and to minister to our enjoyments; and it is only when his exquisite operations are deranged by external violence, that we feel inconvenience or pain.

Such are only a few general outlines of the structure of the eye: for no notice has been taken of the numerous minute veins, arteries, nerves, lymphatics, glands, and many other particulars which are connected with this organ. But, all this delicate and complicated apparatus, in the structure of the eye, would have been of no use whatever for the purpose of vision, had not a distinct substance been created to act upon it, exactly adapted to its nature and functions. In order that the eye might serve as the medium of our perceptions of visible objects, *light* was formed, and made to travel from its source at the rate of 195,000 miles in a second of time. This prodigious velocity of light is, doubtless, essential to the nature of vision: since it actually exists, and since we find that it radi-

ates with the same swiftness from the most distant visible star, as from the sun which enlightens our system. To abate the force of this amazing velocity, its particles have been formed almost infinitely small—a circumstance which alone prevents this delightful visitant from becoming the most tremendous and destructive element in nature. Dr. Nieuwentyt has computed, that, in one second of time, there flows 418,-660,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000* particles of light out of a burning candle, which number contains at least 6,337,242,000,000 times the number of grains of sand in the whole earth, supposing every cubic inch of the earth to contain a million of grains. It has been justly remarked, by Mr. Ferguson and other authors, that "if the particles of light were so large, that a million of them, were equal in bulk to an ordinary grain of sand, we durst no more open our eyes to the light, than suffer sand to be shot point blank against them, from the mouth of a cannon." It may also be remarked, that the property which all bodies possess, of *reflecting* light, is essential to the purpose of vision, without which, the splendid and variegated scene of nature would be changed into a dreadful gloom ; and were the rays of light of one uniform color, and not compounded of various hues, one object could not be distinguished from another, and the beautiful aspect of our globe would instantly disappear.

Thus we see, that the eye is adapted to light, and light to the eye ; and in this admirable adaptation the wisdom of the Creator is strikingly displayed. For light has no effect upon the ear, or upon any other organ of sensation ; so as to produce a perception of visible objects ; as, on the other hand, the undulations of the air have no effect upon the eye, so as to produce the sensation of *sound*. The eye did not produce the light, nor did the light form the eye ; they are perfectly distinct from each other, yet so nicely adapted in every particular that had any one quality or circumstance been wanting in either, the functions of vision could not have been performed in the manner in which they now operate ; which strikingly demonstrates, that one and the same Intelligent Being, possessed of a wisdom beyond our comprehension, formed the curious structure of the eye, and endued the rays of light with those properties of color, motion, and minuteness, which are calculated, through the medium of this organ, to produce, in sentient beings, the ideas of visible objects, And, surely, he never intended that such exquisite skill and contrivance should

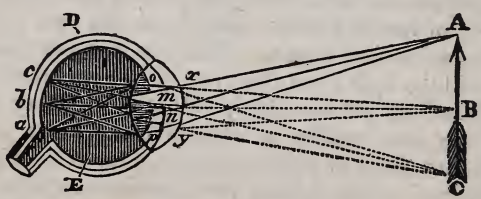
* See Appendix, No. V.

be altogether overlooked by rational beings, for whose pleasure and enjoyment all this benevolent care is exercised.

MANNER IN WHICH VISION IS PERFORMED.

Let us now attend a little to the manner in which vision is performed, by the medium of light acting on the organs of sight. If we take a common convex glass—a reading glass for example—and hold it at some distance from a candle or a window sash, placing a piece of white paper behind the glass, at the distance of its focus, the image of the candle or sash will be painted on the paper, in an inverted position. This experiment may be performed, with a better effect, by darkening a room, and placing the convex glass in a hole cut out of the window shutter, when the rays of light flowing from the objects without, and passing through the glass, will form a picture of the objects opposite the window, on the white paper, adorned with the most beautiful colors. In a manner similar to this, are the images of external objects depicted on the back part of the inner coat or membrane of the eye. The rays of light, proceeding in all directions, from surrounding objects, and falling on the eye, are transmitted through the pupil; and being refracted by the different humours, (particularly by the *crystalline* humour, which acts the part of a convex lens,) they converge to a focus on the *retina*, where the images of visible objects are painted in an inverted position; and, by means of the optic nerve, these images are conveyed to the mind.

The following figure will perhaps more distinctly illustrate



this point. Let *a*, *b*, *c*, *x*, *y*, represent the globe of the eye, and A, B, C, an object at a certain distance from it. Now, it is well known that every point of a visible object sends out rays of light in all directions; and, therefore, a certain portion of the rays which flow from the object A B C, will fall upon the *cornea*, between *x* and *y*, and, passing through the *aqueous* humour, *m*, *n*, and the *crystalline* humour, *o*, *p*, and the *vitreous* humour, D E, will be converged to a focus on the retina, and

paint a distinct picture, *a b c*, of the object A B C, in an inverted position. The rays from the point A of the object, after being refracted by the different humours, will be brought to a point at *a ;* those from B, will be converged at *b ;* and those from C, at *c ;* and, of course, the intermediate rays between A B, and B C, will be formed between *a b*, and *b c*, and the object will become visible by means of its image or representation being painted on the retina, in all the colors and proportions which belong to it. If we take a bullock's eye, and cut off the three coats from the back part, and put a piece of thin white paper over that part, and hold the eye towards the window, or any bright object, we shall see the image of the object depicted upon the paper, and in an inverted position, as stated above.

In order that we may more distinctly perceive the wonders of vision, and the numerous circumstances on which it depends, let us suppose ourselves placed on an eminence, which commands a view of a variegated and extensive landscape. Let us suppose ourselves stationed on Arthur's seat, or on the top of Salisbury Crags, in the vicinity of Edinburgh. Turning our face to the north-west, the city, with its castles, spires, and stately edifices, presents itself to our view. Beyond it, on the north and west, a beautiful country, adorned with villas, plantations, and fertile fields, stretches as far as the eye can reach, till the view is bounded by the castle of Sterling, at the distance of more than thirty miles. On the right hand, we behold the port of Leith, the shipping in the roads, the coast of Fife, the isles of Inchkeith and of May, and the Frith of Forth, gradually losing itself in the German ocean. If we suppose the length of this landscape to be forty miles, and its breadth twenty-five, it will, of course, comprehend an area of a thousand square miles.

The first circumstance which strikes the mind, is *the immense multitude of rays of reflected light* which flow, in all directions, from the myriads of objects which compose the surrounding scene. In order to form a rude idea of this infinity of radiations, I fix my attention on a single object. I direct my eye to Nelson's monument, on the Calton hill. From the parapet at the top, a thousand different points send forth a thousand different cones of rays, which, entering my eye, render the dif ferent parts of it distinctly visible, besides myriads of rays from the same points, which flow in every other direction through the open spaces of the atmosphere which surround them. How many thousands of millions, then, of different radiations, must be issuing forth every moment from the whole mass of

the monument! And if one object pours forth such a flood of rays, how immense must be the number of radiations which are issuing from all the objects which compose this extensive landscape! Myriads of rays, from myriads of objects, must be crossing each other in an infinity of directions, so that the mind is confounded at the apparent confusion which seems to exist in this immensity of radiations; yet every ray passes forward in the crowd, in the most perfect order, and without being blended or confused with any other ray, produces its specific effect on every eye that is open to receive it. But this is not all: these millions of rays which flow from the minutest points of the surrounding scene, before they can produce the sensation of vision, and form a picture of the landscape on the retina, must be compressed into a space little more than one-eighth of an inch in diameter, before they can enter the pupil of the eye; yet they all pass through this small aperture without the least confusion, and paint the images of their respective objects in exactly the same order in which these objects are arranged. Another circumstance demands attention. The rays which proceed from the objects before me, are not all directed to the spot where I stand, but are diffused throughout every point of the surrounding space, ready to produce the same effect, wherever sentient beings are present to receive them. Were the whole inhabitants of Edinburgh placed on the sloping declivity of Arthur's seat, and along the top of Salisbury Crags, and were millions of other spectators suspended in the surrounding atmosphere, similar sensations would be produced, and a scene similar to that which I now behold, would be depicted in every eye. Amidst the infinity of cones of light, crossing each other in an infinity of directions, no confusion would ensue, but every spectator, whose eyes were in a sound state, would obtain a correct view of the scene before him; and hence it happens, that, whenever I shift my position to the right hand or to the left, other streams of light enter my eye, and produce the same effect.

Let me now attend to another circumstance, no less admirable than the preceding, and that is, the *distinct impression* which I have of the shape, color, and motion, of the multiplicity of objects I am now contemplating, and the *small space* within which their images are depicted at the bottom of my eye. Could a painter, after a long series of ingenious efforts, delineate the extensive landscape now before me, on a piece of paper not exceeding the size of a silver sixpence, so that every object might be as distinctly seen, in its proper shape and color, as it now appears when I survey the scene around

me, he would be incomparably superior to all the masters of his art that ever went before him. This effect, which far transcends the utmost efforts of human genius, is accomplished in a moment, in millions of instances, by the hand of nature, or, in other words, by "the finger of God." All the objects I am now surveying, comprehending an extent of a thousand square miles, are accurately delineated in the bottom of my eye, on a space *less than half an inch* in diameter. How delicate, then, must be the strokes of that Divine pencil, which has formed such a picture! I turn my eyes to the castle of Edinburgh, which appears one of the most conspicuous objects in my field of view. Supposing that portion of it which strikes my eye to be 500 feet long, and 90 in height, I find, by calculation, that it occupies only the six hundred thousandth part of the whole landscape, and, consequently, fills in my eye no more than the twelve hundred thousandth part of an inch. I next direct my eye towards the Frith of Forth, and perceive a steamboat sailing between Queensferry and Newhaven, I distinctly trace its motion for the space of 40 minutes, at the end of which it reaches the chain pier at Newhaven, having passed over a space of five miles in length, which is but the eighth part of the *lineal* extent of the landscape in that direction; and, consequently, occupies, in the picture formed on my retina, a lineal space of only one-sixteenth of an inch in extent. And, if the boat be reckoned about 88 feet in length, its image is only the three hundredth part of this extent; and of course, fills a space in the eye of only the four thousand eight hundredth part of a *lineal* inch. Yet, my perception of the motion of the vessel could be produced only by a corresponding motion of its image in my eye; that is, by the *gradual* motion of a point one 4,800th of an inch in diameter, over a space one sixteenth of an inch in length. How inconceivably fine and accurate, then, must be the impression of those strokes which the rays of light, from visible objects, produce on the retina of the eye! The mind is lost in wonder when it attempts to trace so exquisite and admirable an effect.

I take a reflecting telescope, and, through it, view some of the distant parts of the landscape. My wonder is still increased, when I consider the new directions into which the rays of light are bent—the crossings and recrossings, the refractions, and reflections, that take place between the mirrors and the lenses of the instrument, and the successive images that are formed—so that, instead of a scene of confusion, which, previous to experience, might have been expected from the numerous additional bendings and intersections of the rays

—I now perceive hundreds of objects, with the most perfect distinctness, which were before invisible. Rays of light from distant and minute objects, which a moment before made no sensible impression on my eye, being collected and variously modified by the telescope, now paint a vivid representation of their objects, in their true figures, colors, and positions.

From a consideration of the innumerable modifications of the rays of light, and of the immense variety of effects they produce in every region of the earth—I am led to investigate *what proportion of the solar light falls upon our globe*, in order to produce so diversified a scene of sublimity and beauty. Supposing the sun's rays to be chiefly confined, in their effects, within the limits of the planetary system, since they diverge in every direction, they must fill a cubical space 3,600,000,000 miles in diameter; which, consequently, will contain about 24,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 of cubical miles, so that an eye placed in any point of this vast space, would receive a distinct impression from the solar rays. The solidity of the earth is about 264,000,000,000 cubical miles, and, therefore, it receives only the $\frac{1}{90,000,000,000,000,000}$th parts of the light which fills the sphere of the solar system. So that the light which cheers all the inhabitants of the world, and unveils such a variety of beautiful and magnificent objects, is nothing more than *a single stream* of celestial radiance out of ninety thousand billions of similar streams, which the great source of light is every moment diffusing throughout the surrounding worlds. But the solar rays are not confined within the bounds of the planetary system; their influence extends, in every direction, as far as the nearest stars, filling a cubical space at least 40,000,000,000,000 miles in diameter, and which contains 33,500,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,-000, or thirty-three thousand, five hundred sextillions of cubical miles. And, were we to institute comparisons and calculations, with respect to the possible variety of effects they might produce throughout this immense region, whole pages might be filled with figures, cyphers, and computations. We might compute how many globes similar to the earth, or any of the larger planets, might be contained within this vast space, allowing several hundreds of cubical miles of empty space around each globe—how many myriads of refractions and reflections the rays of light would suffer, in regard to the peculiar objects connected with every one of these globes—how many eyes of sentient beings might be affected by the diversities of color, shape, and motion which would thus be produced—and what a variety of shades of light and color, and

what a diversity of scenery would be produced, according to the distances of the respective globes from the central luminary. After what we have just now stated, however, we may rest satisfied, with joining in the pious exclamation of one who had just finished a devout survey of the structure of the human frame: "Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God!" (or, as the words might be rendered,) "How precious are thy wonderful contrivances concerning me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand." In what direction soever I turn mine eyes; whatever portion of thy works I investigate, "*I am still with thee.*"* Thine infinity and unsearchable wisdom are impressed on every object, so that I feel myself every moment encompassed by thine immensity, and am irresistibly led to wonder and adore.

I shall now conclude these reflections on vision, with two or three additional remarks. It is worthy of notice, in the first place, that the eye has the power of adapting itself to objects placed at different distances. By means of some delicate pieces of mechanism, not hitherto satisfactorily explained, it can perceive, with distinctness, a large object, at the distance of six miles, and the next moment it can adjust itself to the distinct perception of an object at the distance of six inches; so that it acts the part both of a telescope and a microscope, and can be *instantaneously* adjusted to perform either as the one instrument, or as the other. This necessarily supposes a corresponding alteration in the state of the organ, every time we lift our eye from a *near*, to look at a *distant* object. Either the *cornea* is somewhat flattened, or the crystalline humour is pushed backwards, or both these changes, in combination with others, may concur in causing the rays from distant objects to unite exactly on the retina, without which, distinct vision cannot be produced. This contrivance, in whatever kind of mechanism it may consist, is one which art would vainly attempt to imitate. We can see objects that are near us, with a microscope, and those that are distant, with a telescope; but we would in vain attempt to see distant objects with the former, or those that are only a few inches from us, with the latter, without a variety of changes being made in the apertures and positions of the glasses belonging to the respective instruments. In this respect, therefore, as well as in every other, the eye is an optical instrument, incomparably superior to any

* Psalm cxxxix. 14, 17, 18.

instrument or imitation that art can produce; and, were it not for the peculiar property now described, it would be almost unfit for the purpose of vision, notwithstanding all the other delicate contrivances which enter into its construction. If it were adjusted only for the distinct perception of distant objects, every object within the limits of an ordinary apartment would appear a mass of confusion; and were it adjusted solely for viewing objects within the limits of a few feet or inches, the glories of the heavens, and the beautiful landscape of the earth, would be veiled from our sight, as if they were enveloped in a mist.

Another circumstance worthy of attention, is, the power which the *pupil* of the eye possesses of contracting or enlarging the aperture or hole through which the light is admitted. When the light is too weak, the pupil is enlarged; when it is too strong, it is again contracted Accordingly, we find, that when we enter a darksome apartment, though, at first, nothing can be accurately distinguished, yet, in the course of a minute or two, when the pupil has had time to dilate, we can perceive most objects with considerable distinctness. And, on the other hand, when we pass from a dark room to an apartment lighted up with a number of lustres, we feel uneasy at the sudden glare, till the pupil has contracted itself, and excluded a portion of the superfluous rays. Were it not for this property, we should, for the most part, either be surrounded with a disagreeable gloom, or oppressed with an excessive splendor. It is for this reason, that we are unable to look upon the sun without being dazzled, and are under the necessity of closing the eye-lids, or of turning away the head, when a strong light suddenly succeeds to darkness.

Again, it may not be improper to observe, how wisely the Author of Nature has fixed the distance at which we ordinarily see near objects most distinctly. This distance is generally from five to eight inches from the eye. But had the eye been formed for distinct vision, at the distance of only *one* inch, the object would have obstructed the light, and room would have been wanting for the performance of many necessary operations, which require the hand to intervene between the eye and the object. And had the limits of distinct vision for near objects been beyond two or three feet, sufficient light would not have been afforded for the inspection of minute objects, and we could neither have written a letter, nor have read a book, with the same convenience and ease we are now enabled to do.

From the preceding descriptions and remarks, it will evi-

dently appear, with what admirable skill the different parts of the organs of vision are constructed, and how nicely they are adapted to the several ends they were intended to subserve.—Were any one of these parts wanting, or obstructed in its functions, vision would either be impeded, or rendered painful and distressing, or completely destroyed. If any of the *humors* of the eye were wanting—if they were less transparent—if they were of a different refractive power—or if they were of a greater or less convexity than they now are, however minute the alteration might be, vision would inevitably be obstructed, and every object would appear confused and indistinct. If the retina, on which the images of objects are painted, were flat, instead of being concave, while objects in the middle of the view appeared distinct, every object towards the sides would appear dim and confused. If the *cornea* were as opaque as the sclerotica, to which it is joined, or if the retina were not connected with the optic nerve, no visible object could possibly be perceived. If one of the six muscles of the eye were wanting, or impeded in its functions, we could not turn it to the right; if a second were deficient, we could not turn it to the left; if a third, we could not lift it upwards; if a fourth, we could not move it downwards; and if it were deprived of the other two muscles, it would be apt to roll about in frightful contortions. If the eyes were placed in any other part of the body than the head—if they were much more prominent than they now are—if they were not surrounded by the bony socket in which they are lodged—and if they were not frequently covered by the eye-lid—they would be exposed to a thousand accidents from which they are now protected. If they wanted moisture, and if they were not frequently wiped by the eye-lids, they would become less transparent, and more liable to be inflamed; and if they were not sheltered by the eye-brows, the sweat and moisture of the forehead would frequently annoy them. Were the *light* which acts upon them devoid of color—were it not reflected from objects in every direction—were its motion less swift, or its particles much larger than they now are—in short, were any one circumstance connected with the structure of this organ, and with the modification of the rays of light materially different from its present arrangement, we should either be subjected to the hourly recurrence of a thousand painful sensations, or be altogether deprived of the entertainments of vision.

How admirable an organ, then, is the eye, and how nicely adapted to unveil to our view the glories of the universe! Without the application of any skill or laborious efforts, on our

part, it turns in every direction, transports us to every surrounding object, depicts the nicest shades and colors on its delicate membranes, and

> "Takes in, at once, the landscape of the world
> *At a small inlet, which a grain might close,*
> And half creates the wond'rous world we see."—YOUNG.

—How strikingly does it display, in every part of its structure and adaptations, the marks of benevolent design, and of Infinite Intelligence! However common it is to open our eyes, and to behold, in an instant, the beauties of an extensive landscape, and however little we may be accustomed to admire this wonderful effect,—there is not a doctrine in Religion, nor a fact recorded in Revelation, more mysterious and incomprehensible. An excellent French writer has well observed—"The sight of a tree and of the sun, which God shows me, is as real and as immediate a revelation as that which led Moses towards the burning bush. The only difference between both these actions of God on Moses and me, is, that the first is out of the common order and economy; whereas the other is occasioned by the sequel and connection of those laws which God has established for the regulation both of man and nature."

If, then, the eye of man (who is a depraved inhabitant of a world lying partly in ruins) is an organ so admirably fitted for extending our prospects of the visible creation—we may reasonably conclude, that organized beings, of superior intelligence and moral purity, possess the sense of vision in a much greater degree of perfection than man, in his present state of degradation—and that they may be enabled, by their *natural* organs, to penetrate into regions of the universe far beyond what man, by the aid of artificial helps, will ever be able to descry. It may not be altogether extravagant, nor even beyond the reality of existing facts, to suppose, that there are intelligences in the regions of Jupiter or Saturn, whose visual organs are in so perfect a state, that they can descry the mountains of our moon, and the continents, islands, and oceans which diversify our globe, and are able to delineate a map of its surface, to mark the period of its diurnal rotation, and even to distinguish its cities, rivers, and volcanoes. It is quite evident, that it must be equally easy to Divine Wisdom and Omnipotence, to form organs with powers of vision far surpassing what I have now supposed, as to form an organ in which the magnificent scene of heaven and earth is depicted, in a moment, within the compass of half an inch. There are animals whose range of vision is circumscribed within the

limits of a few feet or inches; and, had we never perceived objects through an organ in the same state of perfection as that with which we are furnished, we could have formed as little conception of the sublimity and extent of our present range of sight, as we can now do of those powers of vision, which would enable us to descry the inhabitants of distant worlds.—The invention of the telescope shows, that the penetrating power of the eye may be indefinitely increased; and, since the art of man can extend the limits of natural vision, it is easy to conceive, that, in the hand of Omnipotence, a slight modification of the human eye might enable it, with the utmost distinctness, to penetrate into regions to which the imagination can set no bounds. And, therefore, it is not unreasonable to believe, that, in the future world, this will be one property, among others, of the *resurrection-body*, that it will be furnished with organs of vision, far superior to the present, in order to qualify its intelligent inhabitant for taking an ample survey of the "riches and glory" of the empire of God.

I have dwelt somewhat particularly on the functions of the eye, in order to show, that it is only when we take a *minute* inspection of the operations of the Creator, that his Infinite Wisdom and Intelligence are most distinctly perceived. The greater part of Christians will readily admit, that the Wisdom of God is manifested in every object, but few of them take the trouble to inquire, *in what particular contrivances and adaptations* this wisdom is displayed; and, therefore, rest satisfied with vague and general views, which seldom produce any deep impression on the mind. "The works of the Lord," which are "great" and admirable, "*must be sought out* by all those who have pleasure therein;" and the more minutely they are inspected, the more exquisite and admirable do all his arrangements appear.

Were we to enter into an investigation of *the visual organs of the lower animals*, and to consider the numerous varieties which occur in their structure, position and movements, and how nicely the peculiar organization of the eye is adapted to the general structure of the animal, and to its various necessities and modes of existence—the operation of the same inscrutable Wisdom and Intelligence would meet our eye at every step. *Birds*, for example, which procure their food by their beak, have the power of seeing distinctly at a very small distance; and, as their rapid motion through the air renders it necessary that they should descry objects at a considerable distance, they have two *peculiar* mechanical contrivances, connected with their organs of vision, for producing both these

effects. One of these contrivances consists in a flexible rim, formed of bone, which surrounds the broadest part of the eye, and, by occasionally pressing upon its orb, shortens its focal distance, and thus enables it to inspect very near objects.—The other consists of a peculiar muscle, which draws back, as occasion requires, the crystalline humour, by which means it can take a distinct view of a distant landscape; and can pass from the sight of a very near, to the sight of a distant object, with rapidity and ease. In *fishes*, which live in a medium of a different refractive power from that of air, the crystalline humour has a greater degree of convexity, and more nearly approaches to a globular form than that of land animals—which conformation is essentially requisite to distinctness of vision in the watery element. A fish, of course, cannot see distinctly in air, nor a quadruped under water; and every person who has dived into the water with his eyes open, knows, that, though he may perceive the general forms and colors of objects, his vision is obscure and indistinct. In *hares* and *rabbits* the eyes are very convex and prominent, so that they can see nearly quite round them; whereas, in *dogs*, which pursue these animals, the visual organs are placed more in the front of the head, to look rather before, than behind them. Some animals, as *cats* and *owls*, which pursue their prey in the dark, have the pupil of their eye so formed as to be capable of great expansion, so that a few rays of light may make a lively impression on their retina; while the *eagle*, which is able to look directly at the sun, has its pupil capable of being contracted almost to a point. Insects, such as the *beetle*, the *fly*, and the *butterfly*, whose eyes are incapable of motion, have several thousands of small transparent globes set in a convex hemisphere, every one of which is capable of forming an image of an object; so that they are enabled to view the objects around them without moving their heads. But, it would be beyond the limits of my plan to prosecute this subject any farther: enough has already been stated, to show, that the eyes of men and other animals are master-pieces of art, which far transcend the human understanding; and that they demonstrate the consummate wisdom of Him, who planned and constructed the organical functions of the various tribes of animated existence.

I shall now conclude this branch of my subject, by presenting an instance or two of *the mechanism of the bones*, and the movements it is fitted to produce.

The bones of the human frame are *articulated*, or connected together in different ways, but most frequently in the following manner.—Either, 1. a bone with a round head is articulated

with a cavity, and plays in it as a ball in a socket; or, 2. they are connected together by a hinge-like articulation, which enables a bone to move up or down, backwards or forwards, like a door upon its hinges. An idea of these two motions, and the purposes they serve, may be obtained, by considering the construction of the pedestal of a telescope, and the joints on which it moves. One of the joints is of the nature of a hinge, by which a vertical motion, or a motion upwards and downwards is produced. A horizontal motion, or a motion towards the right hand or the left, is produced by a pivot moving in a socket; so that, by these two motions, the telescope can be made to point in any direction. Such is the nature of the articulations of the bones, and the movements they produce; and wherever one or other of these motions, or both of them combined, are requisite for the comfort and convenience of the individual, such a power of motion is uniformly found to exist. If the movement of a joint in every direction would, in any particular case, be found inconvenient, the hinge-like articulation is fixed upon; but if a motion, in every direction, is required for the convenient use of particular members, and for the variety of evolutions which a sentient being may have occasion to make, the ball and socket articulation is combined with the former.

For example, let any person, for a moment, consider the joints of his fingers, and compare them with the joint at his *wrist*, where the hand is connected with the fore arm. If he hold the back of his hand upwards, he will find that he can move his fingers upwards or downwards; but he cannot turn them to the right hand, or to the left, so as to make them describe a circular motion. He will also find that his *wrist* is capable of a similar movement, so that the hand may be bent in a vertical direction. But, in addition to this motion, it is also capable of being turned in a horizontal direction, or from one side to another. In the former case, we have an example of the hinge articulation; in the latter, it is combined with an articulation which produces nearly the same effect as a pivot moving in a socket. Now, had the joints of the fingers been capable of the same motions as the wrist, the hand would have lost its firmness, and been incapable of performing a variety of mechanical operations which require objects to be held with a steady grasp. On the other hand, if the joint of the wrist had been formed in the same manner as the joints of the fingers, and confined to a vertical motion, the hand would have been incapable of one out of a hundred varied movements, which it can now perform with the greatest ease. In this

case, we could not have bored a hole with a gimblet, cut down corn with a sickle, digged the earth with a spade, sewed clothes with a needle, tossed up a ball, or turned up the palm of the hand, for any of the useful purposes for which that motion was ordained. In short, without the rotatory motion of the wrist, the greater part of the operations connected with gardening, agriculture, cookery, washing, spinning, weaving, painting, carving, engraving, building, and other mechanical arts, could not be performed; and such of them as could be effected, would be accomplished only with the greatest inconvenience and labor. Any person may convince himself of this, by holding his hand in a horizontal position, and preventing his wrist-joint from turning round, and then by trying what operations he can easily perform without the rotatory motion; and he will soon perceive with what exquisite skill the numerous movements of our animal frames have been contrived by the great Author of our existence. In each hand there are 27 bones, all of which are essential to the different motions we wish to perform. Every finger is composed of three bones, connected together by articulations, muscles, and ligaments. If, instead of three, each finger were composed of only one bone, it would be quite impossible for us to grasp a single object.

The same admirable contrivance may be perceived in the movements of which the *Head* is susceptible. It was requisite, in order to our convenience and comfort, that we should be enabled to move our head backwards or forwards—to look up towards the heavens, or downwards to the ground. It was also expedient, that it should have a power of turning to the right, or to the left, so as to take in a considerable portion of a circle, without being under the necessity of turning round the whole body. Accordingly we find, that both these motions are provided for, in the manner in which the head is connected with the *vertebræ*. The head rests upon the uppermost of these bones, to which it is connected by a hinge joint, similar to those in the fingers, which allows it to move backward and forward; and, by means of a round, longish process, or projection, which moves in a socket, it is enabled to move horizontally, as upon an axis. Had the first motion been wanting, we could not have looked up to the zenith, without laying flat on our back; nor could we have looked to the ground, without placing our bodies in a prone position; and, in such a case, we could never have seen our own feet, unless when they were bent considerably forward. Had the second motion been wanting, we could have looked to no-

thing, except the objects directly before us, without the trouble of turning round the whole body, either to the right, or to the left. But in the construction of our corporeal system, every thing is so arranged and adapted to another, as at once to contribute to ease, and facility of motion, in all the varied operations and movements we have occasion to perform; which circumstance forcibly demonstrates both the benevolent intentions, and the admirable wisdom of Him "whose hands have made and fashioned us," and who "breathed into our nostrils the breath of life."

The above are only two or three out of a hundred of similar instances, which might be produced to show the benevolent care which has been exercised in arranging and articulating the system of bones, of which the prop-work of the human frame is composed. Were we to enter into an investigation of the actions and uses of the various muscles, the wonderful system of veins and arteries, the action of the heart, stomach, and bowels; the process of respiration, and insensible perspiration, and the system of nerves, glands, lymphatics, and lacteals—a thousand instances of Divine wisdom and beneficence would crowd upon our view, which could not fail to excite the pious and contemplative mind to join in the devotions of the "sweet singer of Israel," "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well." —But as I intended to present only a few *specimens* of the Wisdom of God, as displayed in the construction of the material world, I shall conclude this department of my subject with a single reflection.*

How foolish and ungrateful is it for rational beings to overlook the wise and benevolent arrangements of the Creator, in the material universe! How many thousands of human beings pass their existence without once reflecting on the numerous evidences of divine Wisdom and Beneficence, which appear around them, or feeling the least spark of gratitude for their preservation and comforts, to that Being "in whose hand their breath is, and whose are all their ways!" Yea, how many are there who consider themselves as standing high in the ranks of the Christian profession, who affect

* Those who wish to prosecute this subject, particularly that part of it which relates to the contrivances of Divine Wisdom, which appear in the animal system, will find ample gratification in Nieuwentyt's "Religious Philosopher," Vol. 1. and Dr. Paley's "Natural Theology." A variety of useful remarks on this subject will also be found in Ray's "Wisdom of God in the Creation," Derham's "Physico-Theology," and Bonnet's "Contemplation of Nature."

to look down, with a certain degree of contempt, on the study of the material works of God, as if it were too gross a subject for their spiritual attainments! They profess to trace the wisdom of God in the Scriptures, and to feel gratitude for his pardoning mercy; but they seldom feel that gratitude which they ought to do for those admirable arrangements in their own bodies, and the elements around them, by which their lives are preserved, and their happiness promoted; and even seem to insinuate, that they have little or nothing to do with the contrivances of the God of Nature. They leave it to the genius of infidel philosophers to trace the articulations of the bones, the branchings of the veins and arteries, the properties of light, and the composition of the atmosphere, while they profess to feast their minds on more sublime and spiritual entertainments. But, surely, such astonishing displays of the wisdom and benignity of the Most High, as creation exhibits, were never intended to be treated by his intelligent offspring with apathy or indifference; and to do so, must indicate a certain degree of base ingratitude towards Him whose incessant energy sustains the whole assemblage of sentient and intelligent beings, and who displays himself, in their construction and preservation, to be "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Shall we imagine, that, because God stands in the gracious relation of our Redeemer, he has ceased to stand in the relation of our Creator and Preserver? Or shall we consider those subjects as unworthy of our attention, which are the theme of the praises of the heavenly host?—Rev. iv. 11. Can we suppose that the Almighty displayed his infinite wisdom in the curious organization of the human eye, that man—the only being in this world who is endowed with faculties capable of appreciating its structure, and for whose use and entertainment it was intended—should overlook such a wonderful piece of Divine workmanship, and feel no gratitude for the bestowment of so admirable a gift? Shall we extol the ingenuity displayed in a clock or a watch, in a chess-player, or steam engine, and shall we feel no sentiment of admiration at the view of millions of instances of Divine mechanism, which infinitely transcend the powers of the human understanding? To act in this manner, as too many are disposed to do, is unworthy of man, both as a Christian and as an intelligent agent. Such was not the conduct of the inspired writers; their spirituality of views did not lead them to neglect the contemplation of *any* of the works of God. "I will meditate on *all* thy works," says the Psalmist, "and talk of all thy doings; I will utter abundantly the memory of thy great

goodness, and speak of all thy wondrous works." Accordingly we find, that the wonders of the human frame, the economy of the animal and the vegetable tribes, the scenery of the "dry land," and of the "mighty deep," and the glories of the heavens, were the frequent subjects of their devout contemplation. They considered them in relation to the unceasing agency of God, by whom they were formed and arranged, and as declaring his Wisdom, Goodness, and Omnipotence; and, with this view, ought all the scenes of the visible creation to be investigated by his intelligent creatures.

We have reason to believe, that it is owing, in part, to want of attention to the Divine wisdom and beneficence, as exhibited in the construction of the visible world, that many professed Christians entertain so vague and confused ideas respecting the wisdom and goodness of Deity, as displayed in the economy of Redemption. The terms, Wisdom, Goodness, and Beneficence, in their mouths, become words almost without meaning, to which no precise or definite ideas are attached; because they have never considered the instances and the evidences of these attributes, as displayed in the material creation. And, if our minds have not been impressed with a sense of the wisdom and beneficence of God, in those objects which are presented to the external senses, we cannot be supposed to have luminious and distinct ideas of those spiritual objects and arrangements which are removed beyond the sphere of our corporeal organs.—For all our ideas, in relation to Religion and its objects, are primarily derived from the intimations we receive of external objects, through the medium of our senses; and, consequently, the more clearly we perceive the agency of God, in his visible operations, the more shall we be qualified to perceive the wisdom and harmony of his dispensations, as recorded in the volume of inspiration.

We live in a world, all the arrangements of which are the effects of infinite wisdom. We are surrounded with wonders on every hand; and, therefore, we cease to admire, or to fix our attention on any one of the wonders daily performed by God. We have never been accustomed to contemplate, or to inhabit a world where benevolence and wisdom are not displayed; and, therefore, we are apt to imagine, that the circumstances of our terrestrial existence could not have been much otherwise than they actually are. We behold the sun in the morning, ascending from the east—a thousand shining globes are seen in the canopy of the sky, when he has disappeared in the west. We open our eye-lids, and the myriads of objects which compose an extensive landscape, are, in a

moment, painted on our retina,—we wish to move our bodies, and, in an instant, the joints and muscles of our hands and feet perform their several functions. We spread out our wet clothes to dry, and in a few hours the moisture is evaporated. We behold the fields drenched with rain, and in a few days it disappears, and is dispersed through the surrounding atmosphere, to be again embodied into clouds. These are all *common* operations, and, therefore, thoughtless and ungrateful man seldom considers the obligations he is under to the Author of his existence, for the numerous enjoyments which flow from these wise arrangements. But were the globe we inhabit, and all its appendages to remain in their present state—and were only the principle of *evaporation* and the *refractive and reflective properties of the air* to be destroyed—we should soon feel, by the universal gloom which would ensue, and by a thousand other inconveniences we should suffer, what a miserable world was allotted for our abode. We should most sensibly perceive the wisdom and goodness we had formerly overlooked, and would most ardently implore the restoration of those arrangements for which we were never sufficiently grateful. And why should we not *now*—while we enjoy so many comforts flowing from the plans of infinite Wisdom—have our attention directed to the benevolent contrivances within us, and around us, in order that grateful emotions may be hourly arising in our hearts, to the Father of our spirits? For the essence of true religion consists chiefly in *gratitude* to the God of our life, and the Author of our salvation; and every pleasing sensation we feel from the harmonies and the beauties of nature, ought to inspire us with this sacred emotion. "Hearken unto this, O man! stand still, and consider the wonderful works of God. Contemplate the balancings of the clouds the wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge." "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom. When he uttereth his voice, there is a noise of waters in the heavens; he causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth, and bringeth the winds out of his treasures." While it is shameful for man to be inattentive to the wonders which surround him, what can be more pleasing and congenial to a rational and devout mind, than contemplations on the works of the Most High? "What can be more gratifying," says Sturm, "than to contemplate, in the heavens, in the earth, in the water, in the night and day, and, indeed, throughout all nature, the proofs which they afford of the wisdom, the purity and the goodness of our great Creator and Preserver! What can be more delightful than to recognize, in the whole crea-

tion, in all the natural world, in every thing we see, traces of the ever-working providence, and tender mercy of the great Father of all!"

SECTION IV.

On the Goodness, or Benevolence of the DEITY.

THE Benevolence of God is that perfection of his nature, by which he communicates happiness to the various ranks of sensitive and intelligent existence.

The system of Nature, in all its parts, exhibits an unbounded display of this attribute of the Divine Mind, both in relation to man, and in relation to the subordinate tribes of animated existence. In relation to *Man*—the magnificence and glory of the heavens—the variegated coloring which is spread over the scene of nature—the beautiful flowers, shrubs, and trees, with which the earth is adorned, which not only delight the eye, but perfume the air with their delicious odors—the various kinds of agreeable sounds that charm the ear—the music of the feathered songsters, which fill the groves with their melody—the thousands of pleasant images which delight the eye, in the natural embellishments of creation—the agreeable feelings produced by the contact of almost every thing we have occasion to touch—the pleasure attached to eating, drinking, muscular motion and activity—the luxuriant profusion, and rich variety of aliments which the earth affords—and the interchanges of thought and affection—all proclaim the Benevolence of our Almighty Maker, and show that the communication of happiness is one grand object of all his arrangements. For these circumstances are not *essentially* requisite to our existence. We might have lived, and breathed, and walked, though every thing we touched had produced pain; though every thing we ate and drank had been bitter; though every movement of our hands and feet had been accompanied with uneasiness and fatigue; though every sound had been as harsh as the saw of the carpenter; though no birds had warbled in the groves; though no flowers had decked the fields, or filled the air with their perfumes; though one unvaried scene of dull uniformity had prevailed, and beauty and sublimity had been swept from the face of nature; though the earth had been covered with a mantle of black, and no radiant orbs had appeared in our nocturnal sky. But what a misera-

ble world should we then have inhabited, compared with that which we now possess! Life would have passed away without enjoyment; and pain would have overbalanced the pleasure of existence. Whereas, in the existing constitution of things, all the objects around us, and every sense of which we are possessed, when preserved in its natural vigor, have a direct tendency to produce pleasing sensations, and to contribute to our enjoyment: and it is chiefly when we indulge in foolish and depraved passions, and commit immoral actions, that the benevolent intentions of the Deity are frustrated, and pain and misery produced.

If we consider, further, that the inexhaustable bounty of the Creator, and the numerous pleasures we enjoy, are bestowed upon a guilty race of men, the benevolence of the Deity will appear in a still more striking point of view. Man has dared to rebel against his Maker; he is a depraved and ungrateful creature. The great majority of our race have banished God from their thoughts, trampled upon his laws, neglected to contemplate his works, refused to pay him that tribute of reverence and adoration which his perfections demand, have been ungrateful for his favours, have blasphemed his name, and have transferred to "four-footed beasts, and creeping things," that homage which is due to him alone. It has been the chief part of their employment, in all ages, to counteract the effects of his Beneficence, by inflicting injustice, oppression, and torture, upon each other; by maiming the human frame, burning cities and villages, turning fruitful fields into a wilderness, and by every other act of violence, carrying death and destruction through the world. And if *water*, *air*, and the *light of heaven*, had been placed within the limits of their control, it is more than probable, that whole nations would have been occasionally deprived of these elements, so essential to human existence. Yet, notwithstanding the prevalence of such depraved dispositions, the streams of Divine benevolence towards our apostate race, have never yet been interrupted. The earth has never stopped in its career, and thrown nature into a scene of confusion; the light of heaven has never ceased to illume the world; the springs of water have never been dried up, nor has the fertile soil ceased to enrich the plains with golden harvests. God "hath not left himself without a witness," to his beneficence, in any age, in that he hath unceasingly bestowed on the inhabitants of the world, "rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness." This is one of the characters of Deity which forms the most perfect contrast to the selfish and revengeful

dispositions of man, which as far transcends human benevolence, as the heavens in extent surpass the earth—a character calculated to excite our highest love and admiration, and which we are called upon, in the Sacred Oracles, to imitate and revere. "Be ye merciful, as your Father who is in heaven is merciful: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

From such considerations, we learn, even from the system of nature, that *mercy* is an attribute of the Deity; for, if mercy consists in bestowing favours on those who are unworthy, or who merit punishment, the greatest sinners in all ages have shared in it, and every individual of the human race, now existing, enjoys a certain portion of those comforts which flow from the benevolent arrangements which the Creator has established. "He maketh the sun to rise *on the evil* and on the good." Though the nations in ancient times, as well as at present, "walked in their own way," indulging in impiety, falsehood, lewdness, war, devastations, revenge, abominable idolatries, and every other violation of his law, he still supported the functions of their animal frames, and caused the influence of the sun, the rains, and the dews, to descend upon their fields, that they might be refreshed with his bounty, and filled "with food and gladness." If mercy were not an essential attribute of the Deity, he would have cut them down in the midst of their first transgressions, shattered to pieces the globe on which they dwelt, and buried them in eternal oblivion. But whether Divine mercy will extend to the final forgiveness of sin, and the communication of eternal happiness to such beings, can be learned only from the discoveries of revelation.

In relation to the *inferior animals*—the immense multitude of living creatures with which the earth is replenished, is a striking evidence of the vast profusion of Divine Beneficence. More than a hundred thousand species of animated beings are dispersed through the different regions of the air, the water, and the earth, besides myriads which are invisible to the unassisted eye. To estimate the number of individuals belonging to any one species is beyond the power of man.—What countless myriads of herrings, for example, are contained in a single shoal, which is frequently more than six miles long, and three miles broad! To estimate the number of individuals in all the different species would, therefore, be as impossible as to count the grains of sand in the Arabian deserts.—

There is not a single spot, in any region of the globe, but what teems with animated beings. Yet, all this vast assemblage of sensitive existence is amply provided for by the bountiful Creator. "These all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season." They enjoy not only life, but also a *happy* existence. The sportive motions, and gesticulations of all the animal tribes—the birds skimming through the air, warbling in the groves, and perching on the trees—the beasts of the field, bounding in the forests, and through the lawns —the fishes sporting in the waters—the reptiles wriggling in the dust, and the winged insects, by a thousand wanton mazes —all declare that they are rejoicing in their existence, and in the exercise of those powers with which the Creator has furnished them. So that wherever we turn our eyes, we evidently perceive, that "the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord," and that "his tender mercies are over all his works."

This subject is boundless—but it would be inconsistent with the limited plan of this work, to enter into any particular details. And it is the less necessary, when we consider, that every instance of Divine Wisdom is, at the same time, an instance of *benevolence;* for it is the ultimate object of all the wise contrivances in the system of Nature, that happiness may be communicated to the various ranks of sensitive and intelligent existence. *Goodness* chooses the *end*, and *wisdom* selects the most proper *means* for its accomplishment; so that these two attributes must always be considered in simultaneous operation. And, therefore, the instances I have already specified, of the Wisdom and Intelligence of the Creator, may also be considered, as exemplifications of Divine Benevolence.—I shall, therefore, conclude this topic with the following extract from Dr. Paley:—

"Contrivance proves design; and the prominent tendency of the contrivance, indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances; and all the contrivances we are acquainted with, are directed to beneficial purposes Evil, no doubt, exists; but it is never, that we can perceive, the object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then, is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it: or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance, but it is not the *object* of it. This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you will hardly say of a sickle, that it is made to cut the reaper's fingers, though from the construction of the instrument, and the manner of using it, this mischief often happens. But if you had

occasion to describe instruments of torture or execution, this, you would say, is to extend the sinews ; this to dislocate the joints ; this to break the bones ; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Here pain and misery are the very *objects* of the contrivance. Now nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of nature. We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease ; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said, this is to irritate ; this to inflame ; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys ; this gland to secrete the humor which forms the gout. If, by chance, he come at a part of which he knows not the use, the most he can say is, that it is useless ; no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or torment. Since, then, God hath called forth his consummate wisdom to contrive and provide for our happiness, and the world appears to have been constituted with this design at first, so long as this constitution is upheld by him, we must, in reason, suppose the same design to continue."—*Paley's Moral Philosophy, Book II. Chap.* 5.

Thus, I have endeavored, in this and the preceding section, to exhibit a few specimens of the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in the system of nature. These might have been multiplied to an indefinite extent, but the instances adduced, I presume, are sufficient to show, that the economy of the material world is not altogether a barren subject, to a pious and contemplative mind. Every intelligent believer in Revelation, will readily admit, that it would be a highly desirable object, to induce upon the mass of Christians such a habit of devout attention to the visible works of creation, as would lead them, in their social and solitary walks, to recognize the agency of God, in every object they behold ; to raise their thoughts to Him as the Great First Cause, and to expand their hearts with emotions of gratitude. How very different must be the sentiments and the piety of the man who looks on the scene of wisdom and magnificence around him, with a " brute unconscious gaze," as thousands of professed Christians do—and the grateful and pious emotions of him who recognizes the benevolent agency of God, in the motions of his fingers, and his eye-balls ; in the pulsation of his heart ; in the picture of external objects, every moment formed on his retina ; in the reflection of the rays of light, and the diversified colors they produce ; in the drying of his clothes ; in the constitution of the atmosphere ; in the beauty and magnificence of the earth and the heavens ; and in every other object that meets his eye, in

the expanse of nature! The numberless astonishing instances of Divine agency, which every where present themselves to our view in the scene around us, seem evidently intended to arrest the mind to a consideration of an "ever-present Deity;" and I envy not the sentiments or the feelings of that man who imagines, that he stands in no need of such sensible mediums, to impress his mind with a sense of the benevolent care and *omnipresence* of God.

CHAPTER II.

CONTAINING A CURSORY VIEW OF SOME OF THE SCIENCES WHICH ARE RELATED TO RELIGION AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

THEOLOGY has generally been viewed as a study of a very limited range: and, hence, when it has been admitted into the circle of the sciences, a much smaller space has been allotted for its discussion, than has been devoted to almost any other department of human knowledge. When considered, however, in its most extensive sense—in its relations to the Divine Being—to his past and present dispensations towards the human race—to the present circumstances, and the future destiny of man—and to the physical and moral condition of all the sentient and intelligent beings of which we have any intimation—it ought to be viewed as the most varied and comprehensive of all the sciences; as embracing, within its extensive grasp, all the other departments of useful knowledge, both human and divine. As it has God for its object, it must include a knowledge of the universe he has formed—of the movements which are continually going on throughout the wide extent of his empire, in so far as they lie open to our inspection—of the attributes which appear to be displayed in all his operations—of the moral laws he has framed for the regulation of holy intelligences—of the merciful arrangements he has made for the restoration of fallen man—of the plans by which the knowledge of his will is to be circulated and extended in the world in which we live—of the means by which truth, and moral purity, and order, are to be promoted among our apostate race, in order to their restoration to the happiness they have lost—together with all those diversified ramifications of knowledge, which have either a more remote, or a more immediate bearing on the grand object now specified. Like the lines which proceed from the circumference to the centre of

an immense circle—all the *moral** arts and sciences which have been invented by men—every department of human knowledge, however far it may, at first sight, appear to be removed from religion—may be considered as having a direct bearing on Theology, as the grand central point, and as having a certain tendency to promote its important objects.

It is much to be regretted, that Theology has so seldom been contemplated in this point of view—and that the sciences have been considered rather as so many independent branches of secular knowledge, than as subservient to the elucidation of the facts and doctrines of religion, and to the accomplishment of its benevolent designs. Hence, it has happened, that Philosophy and Religion, instead of marching hand in hand to the portals of immortality, have frequently set themselves in hostile array; and combats have ensued equally injurious to the interests of both parties. The Philosopher has occasionally been disposed to investigate the economy of nature, without a reference to the attributes of that Almighty Being who presides over its movements, as if the universe were a self-moving and independent machine; and has, not unfrequently taken occasion, from certain obscure and insolated facts, to throw out insinuations hostile to the truth and the character of the Christian Revelation. The Theologian, on the other hand, in the heat of his intemperate zeal against the infidel philosopher, has, ungardedly, been led to declaim against the study of science, as if it were unfriendly to religion—has, in effect, set the works of God in opposition to his word—has confounded the foolish theories of speculative minds with the rational study of the works of Deity—and has thus prevented the mass of mankind from expanding their minds, by the contemplation of the beauties and sublimities of nature.

It is now high time that a complete reconciliation were effected between these contending parties. Religion ought never to disdain to derive her supports and illustrations from the researches of science; for the investigations of philosophy into the economy of Nature, from whatever motives they may be undertaken, are nothing else than an inquiry into the plans and operations of the Eternal Mind. And Philosophy ought always to consider it as her highest honor, to walk as an

* The epithet *moral* is here used in its application to arts, because there are certain arts which must be considered as having an *immoral* tendency, such as, the art of war, the art of boxing, of gambling, &c. &c. and which, therefore, cannot have a direct tendency to promote the objects of religion.

handmaid in the train of that religion which points out the path to the regions of eternal bliss. By their mutual aid, and the subserviency of the one to the other, the moral and intellectual improvement of man will be promoted, and the benevolent purposes of God, in the kingdom of providence, gradually accomplished. But when set in opposition to each other, the human mind is bewildered and retarded in its progress, and the Deity is apt to be considered as set in opposition to himself—as proclaiming one system of doctrines from the economy of revelation, and another, and an opposite system, from the economy of nature. But if the Christian Revelation, and the system of the material world derived their origin from the same Almighty Being, the most complete harmony must subsist between the revelations they respectively unfold; and the apparent inconsistencies which occur, must be owing chiefly to the circumstances of our present station in the universe, and to the obscure and limited views we are obliged to take of some of the grand and diversified objects they embrace. And, therefore, we have reason to believe that, when the system of nature shall be more extensively explored, and the leading objects of revelation contemplated in a clearer light, without being tinged with the false coloring of party opinions and contracted views, and when rational inquirers shall conduct their researches with a greater degree of reverence, humility, and Christian temper—the beauty and harmony of all the plans and revelations of the Deity, in reference both to the physical and the moral world, will be more distinctly perceived and appreciated.

In the following cursory sketches, it forms no part of my plan to trace even an *outline* of the different sciences which are connected with religion, much less to enter into any particular details, in relation to their facts and principles. It would be comparatively easy to fill up the remaining sheets of this volume with skeletons of the different sciences; but such meagre details as behooved to be brought forward, could not be interesting to the general reader, and would fail in accomplishing the object proposed. My design simply is, to select some leading facts, or general truths, in relation to some of the physical sciences, for the purpose of showing their connection with the objects of religion and the interests of rational piety. At the same time, such definite descriptions will be given as will enable common readers to appreciate the objects and bearings of the different branches of knowledge which may be presented to their view.

The first science* I shall notice is, that of

NATURAL HISTORY.

This science, taken in its most comprehensive sense, includes a knowledge and description of all the known facts in the material universe.

It is to be regretted, that most books published under the title of *Natural History*, to which common readers have access, contain nothing more than a general description of animals, as if this science were confined merely to one class of beings; whereas there is an infinite variety of other objects seldom noticed, which would appear no less interesting, and, in some instances, much more novel and gratifying to the general reader, and to the youthful mind. All the diversified forms of matter, whether existing on the surface or in the bowels of the earth, in the ocean, the atmosphere, or in the heavens, form the legitimate objects of this department of the science of nature.

Were we, therefore, to sketch a comprehensive outline of the subjects of Natural History, we might, in the first place, take a cursory survey of the globe we inhabit, in reference to its magnitude, figure, motions, and general arrangements—the form, relations, and extent of its continents—the numerous islands which diversify the surface of the ocean—the magnitude, the direction, and the extent of its rivers, and the quantity of water they pour into the ocean—the direction, elevation, and extent of the different ranges of mountains which rise from its surface—the plains, morasses, lakes, forests, dells, and sandy deserts, which diversify its aspect—the extent, the motions, the color, and the different aspects of the ocean, and the facts which have been ascertained respecting its saltness, its depth, its bottom, and its different currents. We might next take a more particular view of some of the most remarkable objects on its surface, and give a detail of the facts which are known respecting the history of *volcanoes*—their number—the countries in which they are situated—the awful phenomena they exhibit—and the devastations they have produced:

* The term *science*, in its most general and extensive sense, signifies *knowledge*, particularly that species of knowledge which is acquired by the exertion of the human faculties. In a more restricted sense, it denotes, a *systematic* species of knowledge, which consists of rule and order, such as Mathematics, Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, &c.—In the discussions contained in this work, it is used in its most general sense, as denoting the various departments of human knowledge, in which sense, history, both natural, civil, and sacred, may be termed *science*.

the history of *earthquakes*, their phenomena and effects, and the countries most subject to their ravages—basaltic and rocky wonders, natural bridges, precipices, cataracts, ice islands, icebergs, glaciers, whirlpools, mineral wells, reciprocating fountains, boiling springs, sulphuric mountains, bituminous lakes, volcanic islands—the various aspects of nature in the different zones, and the contrasts presented between the verdant scenes of tropical climes, and the icy cliffs of the polar regions. We would next take a survey of the subterraneous wonders which lie beneath the surface of the earth—the immense chasms and caverns which wind in various directions among the interior strata of our globe—such as the Great Kentucky cavern, and the grotto of Antiparos—the mines of salt, coal, copper, lead, diamond, iron, quicksilver, tin, gold, and silver—the substances which compose the various strata, the fossil bones, shells, and petrifactions which are embedded in the different layers, and the bendings and disruptions which appear to have taken place in the substances which compose the exterior crust of the earth. We might next survey the *atmosphere* with which the earth is environed, and give a detail of the facts which have been ascertained respecting its specific gravity and pressure, the elementary principles of which it is compounded, its refractive and reflective powers, and the phenomena which result from its various properties and modifications—the *meteors* which appear in its different regions—thunder and lightning, winds, hail, rain, clouds, rainbows; parhelias or mock-suns, meteoric stones, the aurora borealis, luminous arches, ignes fatui, the mirage, the fata morgana, hurricanes, monsoons, whirlwinds and waterspouts, sounds and echoes.

In prosecuting our survey of sublunary nature, we would next advert to the various orders of the *vegetable tribes*—their anatomical structure—the circulation of their juices—the food by which they are nourished—the influence of light and air on their growth and motions—their male and female organs—their periods of longevity—their modes of propagation—their diseases and dissolution—their orders, genera, and species—their immense variety—their influence on the salubrity of the atmosphere—the relation which their roots, leaves, and fruits bear to the wants of man and other animals, in supplying food, clothing, and materials for constructing habitations—the gums and resinous substances they exude—the odors they exhale—the variety of colors they exhibit—the vast diversity of forms in which they appear—and the beauty and variety which they spread over the whole face of nature.

The *mineral kingdom* would next require to be surveyed. We would inquire into the facts which have been ascertained respecting the *earthy*, *saline*, *inflammable*, and *metallic* substances which are found on the surface and in the bowels of the earth—their specific and distinguishing characters—the elementary principles, or simple substances, of which they are composed—the regions of the earth where the respective minerals most frequently abound—and the ends which they are designed to accomplish in the constitution of the globe. We would consider, more particularly, the various metals such as iron, copper, lead, tin, gold, silver, bismuth, zinc, &c. in reference to the substances with which they are united in their native ores—the changes produced upon them by the action of oxygen and the different acids—their combustibility—their combination with phosphorus, sulphur, and carbon; and various compounds into which they may be formed—their important uses in the arts which minister to the comfort and embellishment of human life—their relation to the multifarious necessities of man—and the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, as displayed in their arrangement in the bowels of the earth, and in the admirable properties of which they are possessed. In these details, the natural history of *Iron* would hold a prominent place. In point of *utility*, it claims the highest rank in the class of metals, and is intrinsically more valuable than gold and silver, and all the diamonds of the East.—There is scarcely a mineral substance in the whole compass of nature, which affords a more striking instance of the beneficial and harmonious adaptation of things in the universal system. We would, therefore, consider it in reference to its vast abundance in all parts of the world—the numerous substances into which it enters into combination—its magnetical property—its capability of being fused and welded—the numerous useful utensils it has been the means of producing—its agency in carrying forward improvements in art and science, in the civilization of barbarous tribes, and in promoting the progress of the human mind; and the aids which it affords to the Christian missionary in heathen lands.

Having surveyed the inanimate parts of the terraqueous globe, and its appendages, we might next direct our attention to the animated tribes with which it is peopled. Beginning at *Man*, the head of the animal creation, we would detail the principal facts which have been ascertained respecting his structure and organical functions—the muscular movements of the human body, the system of bones, nerves, veins, and arteries; the process of respiration; and the organs of vision,

hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling, by which he holds a correspondence with the material world—the modifications which appear in his corporeal frame and in his mental faculties, during the periods of infancy, puberty, manhood, and old age—the causes and phenomena of sleep and dreaming—the varieties of the human race, in respect of color, stature, and features—the deviations from the ordinary course of nature, which occasionally occur, in the case of monsters, dwarfs, and giants—the moral and intellectual faculties—and those distinguishing characteristics which prove the superiority of man over the other tribes of animated nature.

The inferior ranks of the animal creation would next demand our attention. We would take a survey of the numerous tribes of *Quadrupeds*, *Birds*, *Fishes*, *Serpents*, *Lizards*, *and Insects*, in reference to the characteristic marks by which the different species are distinguished,—their food, and habitations—the different modes in which they display their architective faculty, in constructing places of abode for shelter and protection—the clothing with which they are furnished—their sagacity in finding out the proper means for subsistence and self-preservation—their hostilities—their artifices in catching their prey, and escaping their enemies—their modes of propagation—their transformations from one state and form to another—their migrations to different countries and climates—their various instincts—their care in rearing and protecting their young—their passions, mental characters, and social dispositions—their language, or modes of communication with each other—their capacities for instruction and improvement—their different powers of loco-motion—the adaptation of all their organs to the purposes for which they seem intended—the indications they give of being possessed of moral dispositions and rational powers—their different periods of longevity, and the ends which they are intended to subserve in the system of nature. Along with these details, certain views might be exhibited of the various forms of sensitive life, and modes of existence, which obtain in those numerous species of animals which are invisible to the naked eye, and which the microscope discovers in almost every department of nature.

Having surveyed the objects which compose our sublunary system, we would next direct our view to the regions of the sky, and contemplate the facts which have been discovered in relation to the celestial orbs. We would first attend to the *apparent* motion of the sun, the different points of the horizon at which he seems to rise and set, and the different degrees of elevation to which he arrives, at different seasons of the year

—the different aspects he presents as viewed from different parts of the earth's surface, and the different lengths of days and nights in different parts of the world. We would next attend to the varied phases of the moon—the direct and retrograde motions of the planets—the apparent diurnal motion of the whole celestial sphere, from east to west—and the different clusters of stars which are seen in our nocturnal sky, at different seasons of the year. We would next consider the deductions which science has made, respecting the order and arrangement of the planets which compose the solar system —their distances from the sun, and from the earth—their magnitudes—the periods of their diurnal and annual revolutions—the secondary planets, or moons, which accompany them—their eclipses—the various phenomena which their surfaces present when viewed through telescopes—the physical influence which some of them produce on the surface of our globe—and the singular appearance of those bodies called *Comets*, which occasionally visit this part of our system. We would, in the next place, extend our views to the starry regions, and consider the number of stars which present themselves to the naked eye—the immensely greater numbers which are discovered by telescopes—the systems into which they appear to be arranged—the facts which have been ascertained respecting *new* stars—double and treble stars—stars once visible, which have now disappeared from the heavens—variable stars, whose lustre is increased and diminished at different periods of time—and the structure and position of the many hundreds of *Nebulæ*, or starry systems, which appear to be dispersed throughout the immensity of creation.

All the particulars now stated, and many others which might have been specified—*considered simply as facts* which exist in the system of Nature—form the appropriate and legitimate objects of Natural History, and demand the serious attention of every rational intelligence, that wishes to trace the perfections and agency of the Almighty Creator. To investigate the *causes* of the diversified phenomena which the material world exhibits, and the principles and modes by which many of the facts now alluded to are ascertained, is the peculiar province of Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and the Mathematical Sciences.

Amidst so vast a variety of objects as Natural History presents, it is difficult to fix on any particular facts, as specimens of the interesting nature of this department of knowledge, without going beyond the limits to which I am necessarily confined in this volume. I shall content myself with a

description of two objects, which have a reference chiefly to the vegetable kingdom. The first of these is

THE BANIAN TREE.—"This tree, which is also called the *Burr tree*, or the *Indian Fig*, is one of the most curious and beautiful of Nature's productions, in the genial climate of India, where she sports with the greatest variety and profusion. Each tree is in itself a grove; and some of them are of an amazing size and extent, and, contrary to most other animal and vegetable productions, seem to be exempted from decay. Every branch from the main body, throws out its own roots; at first, in small tender fibres, several yards from the ground; these continually grow thicker, until, by a gradual descent, they reach the surface, and there, striking in, they increase to large trunks, and become parent trees, shooting out new branches from the tops. These, in time, suspend their roots, and receiving nourishment from the earth, swell into trunks, and shoot forth other branches; thus continuing in a state of progression, so long as the earth, the first parent of them all, contributes her sustenance. A Banian tree, with many trunks, forms the most beautiful walks, vistas, and cool recesses, that can be imagined. The leaves are large, soft, and of a lively green; the fruit is a small fig, when ripe, of a bright scarlet, affording sustenance to monkeys, squirrels, peacocks, and birds of various kinds, which dwell among the branches.

"The Hindoos are peculiarly fond of the Banian tree; they consider its long duration, its outstretching arms, and its overshadowing beneficence, as emblems of the Deity, and almost pay it divine honors. The Brahmins, who thus 'find a fane in every sacred grove,' spend much of their time in religious solitude, under the shade of the Banian tree; they plant it near their temples or pagodas; and in those villages where there is no structure erected for public worship, they place an image under one of these trees, and there perform a morning and evening sacrifice. The natives of all castes and tribes are fond of recreating in the cool recesses, beautiful walks, and lovely vistas of this umbrageous canopy, impervious to the hottest beams of a tropical sun. These are the trees under which a sect of naked philosophers, called Gymnosophists assembled in Arrian's days, and this historian of Ancient Greece presents a true picture of the modern Hindoos. 'In winter,' he says, 'the Gymnosophists enjoy the benefit of the sun's rays in the open air; and in summer, when the heat becomes excessive, they pass their time in cool and moist places, under large trees, which, according to the

accounts of Nearchus, cover a circumference of *five acres*, and extend their branches so far, that *ten thoasand men* may easily find shelter under them.'

"On the banks of the river Narbuddy, in the province of Guzzerat, is a Banian tree, supposed, by some persons, to be the one described by Nearchus, and certainly not inferior to it. It is distinguished by the name of Cubbeer Burr, which was given it in honor of a famous saint. High floods have, at various times, swept away a considerable part of this extraordinary tree; but what still remains, is nearly *two thousand feet* in circumference, measured round the principal stems; the overhanging branches, not yet struck down, cover a much larger space; and under it grow a number of custard-apple and other fruit trees. The large trunks of this single tree amount to *three hundred and fifty;* and the smaller ones exceed *three thousand;* every one of these is constantly sending forth branches and hanging roots, to form other trunks, and become the parents of a future progeny. The Cubbeer Burr is famed throughout Hindostan, not only on account of its great extent, but also of its surpassing beauty. The Indian armies generally encamp around it; and at stated seasons, solemn Jatarras, or Hindoo festivals, to which thousands of votaries repair, from every part of the Mogul empire, are there celebrated. It is said that seven thousand persons find ample room to repose under its shade. It has long been the custom of the British residents in India, on their hunting and shooting parties, to form extensive encampments, and spend weeks together, under this delightful and magnificent pavilion, which affords a shelter to all travellers, particularly to the religious tribes of the Hindoos. It is generally filled with greenwood pigeons, doves, peacocks, and a variety of feathered songsters—with monkeys which both divert the spectator, by their antic tricks, and interest him by the paternal affection they display to their young offspring, in teaching them to select their food, and to exert themselves in jumping from bough to bough,—and is shaded by bats of a large size, many of them measuring upwards of six feet, from the extremity of one wing to the other. This tree affords not only shelter, but sustenance, to all its inhabitants, being covered amid its bright foliage, with small figs, of a rich scarlet, on which they all regale with as much delight as the lords of creation on their more costly fare, in their parties of pleasure."—See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. *Ficus.*

This tree, which is doubtless, one of the most singular and magnificent objects in the vegetable kingdom, appears to be a world in miniature, in which thousands both of human beings,

and of the inferior tribes that traverse the earth and the air, may find ample accommodation and subsistence. What a striking contrast does it present to the forests of trees, or mushrooms, which are perceived by the help of the microscope, in a piece of *mouldiness*—every plant of which is several hundreds of times smaller than the point of a fine needle! Yet both are the effects of the agency of the same All-wise and Omnipotent Being. And what an immense variety of gradations is to be found in the vegetable world, between these two extremes—every part of the vast interval being filled up with flowers, herbs, shrubs, and trees of every color, form, and size, and in such vast multitudes and profusion that no man can number them!

An object, which approximates in a certain degree to the one now described, is mentioned in "Staunton's Account of Macartney's Embassy to China," p. 70. It is called by Botanists, *Adansonia*, and is also known by the name of the *Monkey Bread Tree*, and was discovered in the island of St. Jago. "The circumference, or girth of the base, was 56 feet, which soon divided into two vast branches, the one in a perpendicular direction, whose periphery, or girth, was 42 feet, the other 26. Another, of the same species, stood near it, whose single trunk, girthing only 38 feet, was scarcely noticed."

The only other specimen I shall exhibit to the reader has a relation both to the animal and to the vegetable kingdom. It is well known that the examination of flowers, and vegetables of every description, by the microscope, opens a new and interesting field of wonders to the inquiring naturalist. Sir John Hill has given the following curious account of what appeared on his examining a carnation:

"The principal flower in an elegant bouquet was a carnation: the fragrance of this led me to enjoy it frequently and near The sense of smelling was not the only one affected on these occasions: while that was satiated with the powerful sweet, the ear was constantly attacked by an extremely soft, but agreeable murmuring sound. It was easy to know that some animal within the covert must be the musician, and that the little noise must come from some little creature, suited to produce it. I instantly distended the lower part of the flower, and placing it in a full light, could discover troops of little insects frisking, with wild jollity, among the narrow pedestals that supported its leaves, and the little threads that occupied its centre. What a fragrant world for their habitation! What a perfect security from all annoyance, in the dusky husk that

surrounded the scene of action! Adapting a microscope to take in, at one view, the whole base of the flower, I gave myself an opportunity of contemplating what they were about, and this for many days together, without giving them the least disturbance. Thus, I could discover their economy, their passions, and their enjoyments. The microscope, on this occasion, had given what nature seemed to have denied to the objects of contemplation. The base of the flower extended itself under its influence, to a vast plain; the slender stems of the leaves became trunks of so many stately cedars; the threads in the middle seemed columns of massy structure, supporting at the top their several ornaments; and the narrow spaces between were enlarged in walks, parterres, and terraces. On the polished bottoms of these, brighter than Parian marble, walked in pairs, alone, or in larger companies, the winged inhabitants: these, from little dusky flies, for such only the naked eye would have shown them, were raised to glorious glittering animals, stained with living purple, and with a glossy gold, that would have made all the labors of the loom contemptible in the comparison.—I could, at leisure, as they walked together, admire their elegant limbs, their velvet shoulders, and their silken wings; their backs vying with the empyrean in its blue; and their eyes, each formed of a thousand others, out-glittering the little planes on a brilliant; above description, and too great almost for admiration. I could observe them here singling out their favorite females; courting them with the music of their buzzing wings, with little songs, formed for their little organs, leading them from walk to walk, among the perfumed shades, and pointing out to their taste, the drop of liquid nectar, just bursting from some vein within the living trunk—here were the perfumed groves, the more than mystic shades of the poet's fancy realized. Here the happy lovers spent their days in joyful dalliance, or in the triumph of their little hearts, skipped after one another, from stem to stem, among the painted trees, or winged their short flight to the close shadow of some broader leaf, to revel undisturbed in the heights of all felicity."

This picture of the splendor and felicity of insect life, may, to certain readers, appear somewhat overcharged. But those who have been much in the habit of contemplating the beauties of the animal and vegetable world, through microscopes, can easily enter into all the views which are here described. I have selected this example, for the purpose of illustrating the unbounded goodness of the Creator, in the vast profusion of enjoyment he has communicated, even to the lowest tribes of

animal existence, and as a specimen of those invisible worlds which exist beyond the range of our natural vision. For it appears that there is a gradation of worlds downwards, as well as upwards. However small our globe may appear when compared with the sun, and with the immensity of starry systems which lie dispersed through the infinity of space, there are worlds filled with myriads of living beings, which, in point of size and extent, bear as small a proportion to the earth, as the earth bears to the vast assemblage of the celestial worlds. A single flower, a leaf, or a drop of water may appear as large and as diversified in its structure, to some of the beings which inhabit it, as the whole earth appears to the view of man; and a thousand scenes of magnificence and beauty may be presented to their sight, of which no distinct conception can be formed by the human mind. The many thousands of transparent globes, of which their eyes are composed, may magnify and multiply the objects around them without end, so that an object scarcely visible to the eye of man, may appear to them as a vast extended universe.

"Having examined," says St. PIERRE, "one day, by a microscope, the flowers of thyme, I distinguished in them, with equal surprise and delight, superb flagons with a long neck, of a substance resembling the amethyst, from the gullets of which seemed to flow ingots of liquid gold. I have never made observations of the *corolla*, simply of the smallest flower, without finding it composed of an admirable substance, half transparent, studded with brilliants, and shining in the most lively colors. The beings which live under a reflex thus enriched, must have ideas very different from ours, of light, and of the other phenomena of nature. A drop of dew, filtering in the capillary and transparent tubes of a plant, presents to them thousands of cascades; the same drop fixed as a wave on the extremity of one of its prickles, an ocean without a shore; evaporated into air, a vast aerial sea.—It is credible, then, from analogy, that there are animals feeding on the leaves of plants like the cattle in our meadows, and on our mountains, which repose under the shades of a down imperceptible to the naked eye, and which, from goblets formed like so many suns, quaff nectar of the color of gold and silver."

Thus it appears, that the universe extends to infinity on either hand; and that whenever matter exists, from the ponderous globes of heaven down to the invisible atom, there the Almighty Creator has prepared habitations for countless orders of existence, from the seraph to the animalcula, in order

to demonstrate his boundless beneficence, and the infinite variety of modes by which he can diffuse happiness through the universal system.

> "How sweet to muse upon His skill displayed!
> Infinite skill! in all that he has made;
> To trace in nature's most minute design
> The signature and stamp of Power Divine;
> Contrivance exquisite, expressed with ease
> Where unassisted sight no beauty sees;
> The shapely limb and lubricated joint,
> Within the small dimensions of a point;
> Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,
> His mighty work who speaks, and it is done.
> Th' invisible in things scarce seen revealed;
> To whom an atom is an ample field!"—COWPER'S RETIREMENT.

With regard to the *religious* tendency of the study of Natural History, it may be remarked—that, as all the objects which it embraces are the *workmanship of God*—the delineations and descriptions of the Natural Historian, must be considered as "The history of the operations of the Creator;" or, in other words, so far as the science extends, "The history of the Creator himself:" for the marks of his incessant agency, his power, wisdom, and beneficence are impressed on every object, however minute, throughout the three kingdoms of nature, and throughout every region of earth, air, and sky. As the Deity is invisible to mortal eyes, and cannot be directly contemplated by finite minds, without some material medium of communication—there are but two mediums with which we are acquainted, by which we can attain a knowledge of his nature and perfections. These are, either the *facts* which have occurred in the course of his providential dispensations towards our race, since the commencement of time, and the moral truths connected with them—or, the facts which are displayed in the economy of nature. The first class of facts is recorded in the Sacred History, and in the Annals of Nations; the second class is exhibited in the diversified objects and motions which appear throughout the system of the visible universe. The one may be termed the *Moral History*, and the other, the *Natural History* of the operations of the Creator. It is obviously incumbent on every rational being, to contemplate the Creator through both these mediums; for each of them conveys its distinct and peculiar revelations; and, consequently, our perception of Deity through the one medium, does not supersede the necessity of our contemplating him through the other. While, therefore, it is our duty to contemplate the perfections, the providence, and the agency of God, as displayed in the Scripture Revelation, it is

also incumbent upon us, to trace his attributes in the System of Nature, in order that we may be enabled to contemplate the eternal Jehovah, *in every variety of aspect*, in which he has been pleased to exhibit himself, in the universe he has formed.

The visible creation may be considered as a permanent and sensible manifestation of Deity; intended every moment to present to our view, the unceasing energies of Him "in whom we live and move." And if the train of our thoughts were directed in its proper channel, we would perceive God in every object, and in every movement: we would behold him operating in the whirlwind, and in the storm; in the subterraneous cavern, and in the depths of the ocean; in the gentle rain, and the refreshing breeze; in the rainbow, the fiery meteor, and the lightning's flash; in the splendors of the sun, and the majestic movements of the heavens; in the frisking of the lambs, the songs of birds, and the buzz of insects; in the circulation of our blood, the movements of our joints, the motion of our eyeballs, and in the rays of light which are continually darting from surrounding objects, for the purposes of vision. For these, and ten thousand other agencies in the system of nature, are nothing else but the voice of Deity, proclaiming to the sons of men, in silent but emphatic language, "Stand still, and consider the wonderful works of God."

If, then, it be admitted, that the study of Nature is the study of the Creator—to overlook the grand and beautiful scenery with which we are surrounded, or to undervalue any thing which Infinite Wisdom has formed, is to overlook and contemn the Creator himself. Whatever God has thought proper to create, and to present to our view in the visible world it becomes man to study and contemplate, that, from thence he may derive motives to excite him to the exercise of reverence and adoration, of gratitude and praise. In so far as any individual is unacquainted with the various facts of the history of nature, in so far does he remain ignorant of the manifestations of Deity; for every object, on the theatre of the universe, exhibits his character and designs in a different point of view. He who sees God only as he displays himself in his operations on the earth, but has never contemplated the firmament with the eye of reason, must be unacquainted with those amazing energies of eternal Power, which are displayed in the stupendous fabric and movements of the orbs of heaven. He who sees God only in the general appearances of nature, but neglects to penetrate into his minute operations, must re-

main ignorant of those astonishing manifestations of Divine wisdom and skill which appear in the contrivances, adaptations, and functions of the animal and the vegetable kingdoms. For, the more we know of the work, the more accurate and comprehensive will be our views of the Intelligence by whom it was designed; and the farther we carry our investigations of the works of God, the more admirable and astonishing will his plans and perfections appear.

In short, a devout contemplation of the works of nature tends to ennoble the human soul, and to dignify and exalt the affections. It inspires the mind with a relish of the beauty, the harmony, and order which subsist in the universe around us—it elevates the soul to the love and admiration of that Being who is the author of our comforts, and of all that is sublime and benificent in creation, and excites us to join with all holy beings in the chorus of praise to the God and Father of all. For they

> "Whom Nature's works can charm, with God himself
> Hold converse, grow familiar day by day
> With his conceptions, act upon his plan,
> And form to his the relish of their souls."

The man who surveys the vast field of nature, with the eye of reason and devotion, will not only gain a more comprehensive view of that illimitable power which organized the universe, but will find his sources of enjoyment continually increased, and will feel an ardent desire after that glorious world, where the veil which now hides from our sight some of the grandest manifestations of Deity will be withdrawn, and the wonders of Omnipotence be displayed in all their splendor and perfection.

In conformity with these sentiments, we find the inspired writers, in numerous instances, calling our attention to the wonders of creating power and wisdom. In one of the first speeches in which the Almighty is introduced as addressing the sons of men, and the longest one in the Bible,* our attention is exclusively directed to the subjects of Natural History; —the whole address having a reference to the economy of Divine Wisdom in the arrangement of the world at its first creation—the wonders of the ocean, and of light and darkness —the phenomena of thunder and lightning, rain, hail, snow, frost, and other meteors in the atmosphere—the intellectual faculties of man, and the economy and instincts of quadrupeds, birds, fishes, and other tribes of animated existence. Indeed,

* Job, chap. xxxviii. xxxix. xl. xli.

the greater part of the sublime descriptions contained in the book of Job has a direct reference to the agency of God in the material creation, and to the course of his providence in relation to the different characters of men; and the reasonings of the different speakers in that sacred drama proceed on the supposition that their auditors were intimately acquainted with the varied appearances of nature, and their tendency to exhibit the character and perfections of the Omnipotent Creator.—We find the Psalmist, in the 104th Psalm, employed in a devout description of similar objects, from the contemplation of which his mind is raised to adoring views of their Almighty Author—and, from the whole of his survey, he deduces the following conclusions :—"How manifold are thy works, O Lord! *In wisdom* thou hast made them all! The earth is full of thy riches ; so is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. The Glory of the Lord shall endure for ever ; the Lord shall rejoice in all his works.* I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God, while I have my being."

But in order to enter into the spirit of such sublime reflections, we must not content ourselves with a superficial and cursory view of the objects and operations of nature,—we must not think it sufficient to acquiesce in such vague propositions as these—"The glory of God is seen in every blade of grass, and every drop of water ; all nature is full of wonders, from the dust of the earth to the stars of the firmament." We must study the works of creation with ardor, survey them with minute attention, aud endeavour to acquire a *specific* and *comprehensive* knowledge of the Creator's designs. We must endeavour to acquire a knowledge of the particular modes, circumstances, contexture, configurations, adaptations, structure, functions, and relations of those objects in which benevolence and design conspicuously appear—in the animal and the vegetable world, in the ocean, the atmosphere, and the hea-

* The *glory* of the Lord in this passage, denotes the display of his perfections in the material universe : and the declaration of the inspired writer plainly intimates, that this display will continue *for ever*, and will remain as an object of unceasing contemplation to all intelligences, and as an eternal monument of his Power and Wisdom. For, although the earth and the aerial heavens will be changed at the close of that dispensation of Providence which respects our world, yet the general frame of the universe, in its other parts, will remain substantially the same ; and not only so, but will in all probability be perpetually increasing in magnitude and grandeur. And the change which will be effected in respect to the terraqueous globe and its appendages will be such, that Jehovah will have reason to "rejoice" in this, as well as in all his other works.

vens; that the mind may be enabled to draw the conclusion with full conviction and intelligence—"*In wisdom thou hast made them all.*" The pointed interrogatories which Jehovah addressed to Job, evidently imply, that Job had previously acquired an intimate acquaintance with the works of nature. It seems to be taken for granted, as a matter of course, that he made himself acquainted with the general range of facts in the visible creation; and the intention of the several questions presented to his consideration evidently was to impress him with a sense of his own impotency, and to lead him to the investigation of the wonders of Creating Power which he had formerly overlooked.—The conclusion which the Psalmist draws respecting the *Wisdom* displayed throughout all the works of God, plainly intimates, that he had made the different parts of nature the subject of minute examination, and of deep reflection; otherwise he could not have rationally deduced his conclusion, or felt those emotions which filled his mind with the pious rapture so beautifully expressed in that hymn of praise to the Creator of the world.

We have, therefore, reason to believe, from these and other instances, that pious men, "in the days of old," were much more accustomed than modern Christians to contemplate and admire the visible works of the Lord—and it is surely much to be regretted, that we who enjoy so many superior means of information, and who have access to the brilliant discoveries of later and more enlightened times, should manifest so much disregard to "the works of Jehovah and the operations of his hands." To enable the common mass of Christians to enter into the spirit of this delightful study and *Christian duty*, should, therefore, be one object of those periodical and other religious works which are put into their hands; so that they may be enabled, with vigor and intelligence, to form the pious resolution of Asaph, "I will meditate on all thy works, O Lord! and talk of thy doings." "I will utter abundantly the memory of thy great goodness, and tell of thy wondrous works."*

GEOGRAPHY.

The next department of knowledge I shall notice is the science of Geography.

The object of this science is, to describe the world we

* A select list of popular works on Natural History, and the other sciences, noticed in the following sketches, will be found in the *Appendix.*

inhabit, in reference to the continents, islands, mountains, oceans, seas, rivers, empires, and kingdoms with which it is diversified, together with the manners, customs, and religion of the different tribes which people its surface.

In order to form an accurate conception of the relative positions of objects on the surface of the earth, and to enter with intelligence on the study of this subject, it is requisite, first of all, to have an accurate idea of its *figure* and *magnitude*. For a long series of ages it was supposed by the bulk of mankind, that the surface of the earth was nearly a plane, indefinitely extended, and bounded on all sides by the sky. Lactantius, and several of the fathers of the Christian church, strenuously argued that the earth was extended infinitely downwards, and established upon several foundations. The ancient philosopher Heraclitus is said to have believed that the earth was of the shape of a skiff or canoe, very much hollowed; and the philosopher Leucippus supposed it to be of the form of a cylinder or a drum. It is only within the period of the last three hundred years that the true figure of the earth has been accurately ascertained. This figure is now found to be that of an oblate spheroid, nearly approaching to the shape of a globe or sphere.—To have asserted this opinion several ages ago would have been considered as a heresy in religion, and would have subjected its abettors to the anathemas of the church, and even to the peril of their lives.—Historians inform us that the learned Spigelius, bishop of Upsal, in Sweden, suffered martydom at the stake, in defence of the doctrine of the *Antipodes;* and we know that, for asserting the motion of the earth, the celebrated philosopher Galileo was immured in a dungeon, and condemned by an assembly of Cardinals to all the horrors of perpetual imprisonment. The doctrine he maintained, and which is now universally received by every one acquainted with the subject, was declared by those arrogant ecclesiastics to be "a proposition absurd in its very nature, false in philosophy, heretical in religion, and contrary to the Holy Scriptures." Such are some of the horrible and pernicious consequences which flow from ignorance of the phenomena of nature, and of those laws by which the Almighty governs the universe he has formed; and which prove it to be a Christian duty for every rational being to study the order and economy of the visible world.

That the earth is nearly of a globular figure, is proved by the following considerations: 1. When we stand on the sea shore, while the sea is perfectly calm, we perceive that the surface of the water is not quite plain, but convex or rounded;

and if we are on one side of an arm of the sea, as the Frith of Forth, and, with your eyes near the water, look towards the opposite coast, we shall plainly see the water elevated between our eyes and the opposite shore, so as to prevent our seeing the land near the edge of the water. The same experiment may be made on any portion of still water, of a mile or two in extent, when its convexity will be perceived by the eye. A little boat, for instance, may be perceived by a man who is any height above the water, but if he stoops down, and lays his eye near the surface, he will find that the fluid appears to rise, and intercept the view of the boat. 2. If we take our station on the sea-shore, and view the ships leaving the coast, in any direction—as they retire from our view, we may perceive the masts and rigging of the vessels when the hulls are out of sight, and, as it were, sunk in the water. On the other hand, when a ship is approaching the shore, the first part of her that is seen is the topmast; as she approaches nearer, the sails become visible, and, last of all, the hull comes gradually into view.* The reason of such appearances obviously is that the round or convex surface of the water interposes between our eye and the body of the ship, when she has reached a certain distance, while, at the same time, the sails and topmast, from their greater elevation, may be still in view. To the same cause it is owing, that the higher the eye is placed, the more extensive is the prospect; and hence it is common for sailors to climb to the tops of masts, in order to discover land or ships at a distance. The contrary of all this would take place, if the earth and waters were an extended plane. When a ship came within view, the hull would first make its appearance, being the largest object, next the sails, and, last of all, the topmast. These considerations, which hold true in all parts of the world, prove to a certainty, that the mass of the ocean is of a globular form; and if the ocean be a portion of a sphere it follows that the *land* also is of the same general figure; for no portion of the earth's surface is elevated above four or five miles above the level of the ocean. 3. That the earth is round from north to south, appears from the following circumstance:—When we travel a considerable distance from north to south, or from south to north, a number of new stars successively appear in the heavens, in the quarter to which we are advancing, and many of those in the opposite quarter gradually

* In order to make such observation to advantage, the observer's eye should be, as near as possible, on a level with the sea, and he should use a telescope to enable him to perceive more distinctly the upper part of the vessel.

disappear, which would not happen if the earth were a plane in that direction. 4. That the earth is round, from east to west, appears from actual experiment; for many navigators, by sailing in a westerly direction, have gone quite round it, from east to west; and, were it not for the frozen seas within the polar regions which interrupt navigation in those directions, it would, long ere now, have been circumnavigated from north to south. 5. All those proofs are confirmed and illustrated by eclipses of the moon, which present an *ocular demonstration* of the earth's rotundity. An eclipse of the moon is caused by the intervention of the body of the earth between the sun and the moon; in which case, the shadow of the earth falls upon the moon. This shadow is found in all cases, and in every position of the earth, to be of a *circular* figure: which incontrovertibly proves, that the whole mass of land and water, of which the earth is composed, is nearly of a globular form. The mountains and vales which diversify its surface detract little or nothing from its globular shape; for they bear no more proportion to its whole bulk than a few grains of sand to a common terrestrial globe; the highest mountains on its surface being little more than the two thousandth part of its diameter. Some of the mountains on the surface of the moon are higher than those on the earth, and yet that body appears both to the naked eye, and through telescopes, of a spherical figure.

To some readers, the discovery of the true figure of the earth may appear as a matter of very trivial importance in religion. I hesitate not, however, to affirm that it constitutes a most important fact in the history of Divine Providence. Had not this discovery been made, it is probable, that the vast continent of America might yet have remained undiscovered; for Columbus, who first discovered that new world, had learned, contrary to the general opinion of the times, that the earth was of a spherical figure; and, from the maps then existing, he began to conjecture, that the nearest way of sailing to the East Indies, would be to sail westward. And although he missed the object of his research, he was the means of laying open to view a vast and unknown region of the earth, destined, in due time, to receive from the Eastern world, the blessings of knowledge, civilization, and religion. On the knowledge of the spherical figure of the earth, the art of navigation, in a great measure depends; and all the voyages of discovery, which have been made in later years, were undertaken in consequence of the knowledge of this fact. Had mankind remained unacquainted with this discovery, the cir

cumnavigation of the globe would never have been attempted, —vast portions of the habitable world would have remained unknown and unexplored—no regular intercourse would have been maintained between the various tribes of the human race, and, consequently, the blessings of Divine Revelation could never have been communicated to the greater part of the Gentile world. Besides, the knowledge of the true figure and magnitude of our sublunary world forms the ground-work of all the sublime discoveries which have hitherto been made in the regions of the firmament. For its diameter forms the *base line* of those triangles by which the distances and magnitudes of the celestial globes have been determined; without a knowledge of the extent of which, the important results which have been deduced respecting the system of the universe, could not have been ascertained, and, consequently, our views of the grandeur and omnipotence of the Deity, and of the magnificence and extent of his dominions, must have been much more circumscribed than they now are. Such is the intimate connection that subsists between every part of the chain of Divine dispensations, that if any one link had been either broken or dissolved, the state of things, in the moral and intellectual world, would have been very different from what it now is; and the plans of Providence, for accomplishing the renovation and improvement of mankind, would have been either partially or totally frustrated.

With regard to the *magnitude* of the earth—I have already stated the mode by which we may acquire the most accurate and comprehensive conception of this particular, in the course of the illustrations which were given of the Omnipotence of Deity, (pp. 34—38.) It is necessary here only to remark—that, according to the latest computations, the diameter of the earth is about 7,930 miles, and its circumference 24,912 miles; and, consequently, the whole surface of the land and water it contains, comprehends an area of 197,552,160 miles. The proportion of land and water on its surface cannot be very accurately ascertained; but it is quite evident, from an inspection of a map of the world, that the water occupies at least two-thirds of its surface, and, of course, the land cannot occupy more than one-third. Supposing it to be only one-fourth of the earth's surface, it will contain 49,387,040 square miles, which is considerably more than what is stated in most of ou. late systems of Geography; in some of which the extent of the land is rated at 39 millions, and in others, so low as 30 millions of square miles—the former of which statements being less than one-fifth, and the latter less than one-sixth of

the surface of the globe. But, it is quite obvious that the extent of the land cannot be less than one-fourth of the area of the globe, and must, therefore, comprehend at least 50 millions of square miles. And if a large Arctic continent, eleven hundred leagues in length, exist around the North Pole, as some French philosophers infer, from Captain Parry's late discoveries*—the quantity of land on the terraqueous globe will be much greater than what has been now stated.

General Divisions of the Earth.—The surface of the earth is divided, from north to south, by two bands of earth, and two of water. The first band of earth is the ancient or Eastern Continent, comprehending Europe, Asia, and Africa; the greatest length of which is found to be in a line beginning on the east point of the northern part of Tartary, and extending from thence to the Cape of Good Hope, which measures about 10,000 miles, in a direction nearly from North-east to South-west; but if measured according to the meridians, or from north to south, it extends only 7,500 miles, from the northermost cape in Lapland to the Cape of Good Hope. This vast body of land contains about 36 millions of square miles, forming nearly one-fifth of the whole surface of the globe. The other band of earth is, what is commonly called the New Continent, which comprehends North and South America. Its greatest length lies in a line beginning at the mouth of the river Plata, passing through the island of Jamaica, and terminating beyond Hudson's Bay; and it measures about 8,000 miles. This body of land contains about 14 millions of square miles, or somewhat more than a third of the old continent.

It may not be improper here to remark, that the two lines now mentioned, which measure the greatest lengths of the two continents, divide them into two equal parts, so that an equal portion of land lies on each side of these lines, and that each of these lines has an inclination of about 30 degrees to the equator, but in opposite directions; that of the old continent extending from the north-east to the south-west; and that of the new continent, from the north-west to the south-east; and that they both terminate at the same degree of northern and southern latitude. It may also be noticed, that the old and new continents are almost opposite to each other, and that the old is more extensive to the north of the equator, and the new more extensive to the south. The centre of the old continent is in the 17th degree of north latitude, and the

* See Monthly Magazine, April, 1823, p. 259.

centre of the new, in the 17th degree of south latitude; so that they seem to be made to counterbalance each other, in order to preserve the equability of the diurnal rotation of the earth. There is also a singular connection between the two continents, namely, that if they were divided into two parts, all four would be surrounded by the sea, were it not for the two small necks of land called the isthmuses of Suez and Panama.*

Between the two continents now mentioned, lie two immense bands of water, termed the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans, whose greatest length is likewise in a direction from north to south.

Besides the two bands of earth to which I have adverted, many extensive portions of land are dispersed through the ocean, which covers the remaining part of the earth's surface; particularly the extensive regions of New Holland, which occupy a space nearly as large as the whole of Europe, and the Arctic continent, which probably exist within the Northern Polar regions, and which some French writers propose to designate by the name of *Boreasia*, is in all probability, of equal extent. There are also the extensive islands of New Guinea, Borneo, Madagascar, Sumatra, Japan, Great Britain, New Zealand, Ceylon, Iceland, Cuba, Java, and thousands of others, of different dimensions, scattered through the Pacific, the Indian, and the Atlantic oceans, and which form a very considerable portion of the habitable regions of the globe.

General Features of the Earth's Surface.—In taking a general survey of the external features of the earth, the most prominent objects that strike the eye are those huge elevations which rise above the level of its general surface, termed Hills and Mountains. These are distributed in various forms and sizes, through every portion of the continents and islands; and running into immense chains, form a sort of connecting band to the other portion of the earth's surface. The largest mountains are generally formed into immense chains, which extend, in nearly the same direction, for several hundreds, and even thousands of miles. It has been observed by some philosophers, that the most lofty mountains form two immense ridges, or belts, which, with some interruptions, extend around the whole globe, in nearly the same direction. One of these ridges lies between the 45th and 55th degree of North latitude. Beginning on the western shores of France and Spain, it extends eastward, including the Alps

* See Buffon's Natural History, vol. 1.

and the Pyrenees, in Europe, the Uralian and Altaic mountains, in Asia—extending from thence to the shores of Kamschatka, and, after a short interruption from the sea, they rise again on the western coast of America, and terminate at Canada, near the eastern shore. It is supposed that the chain is continued completely round the globe, through the space that is covered by the Atlantic ocean, and that the Azores, and other islands in that direction, are the only summits that are visible, till we come to the British isles. The other ridge runs along the Southern hemisphere, between the 50th and 30th degrees of South latitude, of which detached portions are found in the mountains of Tucuman, and of Paraguay, in South America,—of Monomotpa and Caffraria, in Africa; in New Holland, New Caledonia, the New Hebrides, the Friendly, the Society, and other islands in the Pacific ocean. From these ridges flows a variety of ramifications, in both hemispheres, towards the Equator, and the Poles, which altogether present a magnificent scenery, which diversifies and enlivens the surface of our globe.

The highest mountains in the world, according to some late accounts published in the "Transactions of the Asiatic Society," are the *Himalaya* chain, north of Bengal, on the borders of Thibet. The highest mountain in this range is stated to be about 27,000 feet, or a little more than five miles in a perpendicular height, and is visible at the distance of 230 miles. Nineteen different mountains in this chain are stated to be above four miles in perpendicular elevation. Next to the Himalayas, are the Andes, in South America, which extend more than 4000 miles in length, from the province of Quito to the straits of Magellan. The highest summit of the Andes, is Chimborazo, which is said to be 20,600 feet, or nearly four miles, above the level of the sea. The highest mountains in Europe, are the Alps, which run through Switzerland and the north of Italy,—the Pyrenees, which separate France from Spain, and the Dofrafeld, which divide Norway from Sweden The most elevated ridges in Asia, are Mount Taurus, Imaus, Caucasus, Ararat, the Uralian, Altaian, and the mountains of Japan—in Africa, Mount Atlas, and the mountains of the Moon Some of the mountains in these ranges, are found to contain immense caverns or perforations, of more than two miles in circumference, reaching from their summits to an immeasurable depth into the bowels of the earth. From these dreadful openings are frequently thrown up, to an immense height, torrents of fire and smoke, rivers of melted metals, clouds of ashes, and cinders, and sometimes red-hot stones and enormous rocks, to

the distance of several miles, accompanied with thunders, lightnings, darkness, and horrid subterraneous sounds—producing the most terrible devastations through all the surrounding districts. The most noted mountains of this kind in Europe, are mount Hecla, in Iceland ; Etna, in Sicily ; and Vesuvius, near the city of Naples, in Italy. Numbers of volcanoes are also to be found in South America, in Africa, in the islands of the Indian ocean, and in the Empire of Japan.*

We who live in Great Britain, where the highest mountain is little more than three quarters of a mile in perpendicular elevation, can form no adequate idea of the magnificence and awful sublimity of the mountain scenery in some of the countries now mentioned ; especially when the volcano is belching forth its flames with a raging noise, and spreading terror and desolation around its base. From the tops of the lofty ridges of the Andes, the most grand and novel scenes sometimes burst upon the eye of the astonished traveller. He beholds the upper surface of the clouds far below him, covering the subjacent plain, and surrounding, like a vast sea, the foot of the mountain ; while the place on which he stands appears like an island in the midst of the ocean. He sees the lightnings issuing from the clouds, and hears the noise of the tempest, and the thunders rolling far beneath his feet, while all is serene around him, and the blue vault of heaven appears without a cloud. At other times, he contemplates the most sublime and extensive prospects—mountains rangeo around him, covered with eternal snows, and surrounding like a vast amphitheatre, the plains below—rivers winding from their sources towards the ocean—cataracts dashing headlong over tremendous cliffs—enormous rocks detached from their bases, and rolling down the declivity of the mountains with a noise louder than thunder—frightful precipices impending over his head—unfathomable caverns yawning from below—and the distant volcano sending forth its bellowings, with its top enveloped in the fire and smoke.—Those who have studied nature on a grand scale, have always been struck with admiration and astonishment at the sublime and awful exhibition of wonders which mountainous regions exhibit ; and, perhaps, there is no *terrestrial* scene which presents, at one view, so many objects of overpowering magnitude and grandeur, and which inspires the mind with so impressive an idea of the power of that Almighty Being, who " weigheth the mountains in scales, and taketh up the isles as a very little thing."

* A more particular description of the phenomena of these terrific objects will be found in Chap. iv. Sect. 2.

THE OCEAN.—The ocean surrounds the earth on all sides, and penetrates into the interior parts of different countries; sometimes by large openings, and frequently by small straits. Could the eye take in this immense sheet of waters at one view, it would appear the most august object under the whole heavens. It occupies a space on the surface of the globe at least three times greater than that which is occupied by the land; comprehending an extent of 148 millions of square miles. Though the ocean, strictly speaking, is but *one* immense body of waters extending in different directions, yet different names have been appropriated to different portions of its surface. That portion of its waters which rolls between the western coast of America and the eastern of Asia, is called the *Pacific* ocean; and that portion which separates Europe and Africa from America, the *Atlantic* ocean. Other portions are termed the *Northern*, *Southern*, and *Indian* oceans. When its waters penetrate into the land, they form what are called gulfs, and mediterranean seas. But without following it through all its windings and divisions, I shall simply state a few general facts.

With regard to the DEPTH of this body of water, no certain conclusions have yet been formed. Beyond a certain depth, it has hitherto been found unfathomable. We know, in general, that the depth of the sea increases gradually as we leave the shore; but we have reason to believe that this increase of depth continues only to a certain distance. The numerous islands scattered every where through the ocean, demonstrate, that the bottom of the waters, so far from uniformly sinking, sometimes rises into lofty mountains. It is highly probable, that the depth of the sea is somewhat in proportion to the elevation of the land; for there is some reason to conclude, that the present bed of the ocean formed the inhabited part of the ancient world, previous to the general Deluge, and that we are now occupying the bed of the former ocean; and, if so, its greatest depth will not exceed four or five miles; for there is no mountain that rises higher above the level of the sea. But the sea has never been actually sounded to a greater depth than a mile and 66 feet. Along the coast its depth has always been found proportioned to the height of the shore; where the coast is high and mountainous, the sea that washes it is deep; but where the coast is low, the water is shallow. To calculate the *quantity of water* it contains, we must therefore suppose a medium depth. If we reckon its average depth at two miles, it will contain 296 millions of cubical miles of water. We shall have a more specific idea of

this enormous mass of water, if we consider, that it is sufficient to cover the whole globe, to the height of more than eight thousand feet; and if this water were reduced to one spherical mass, it would form a globe of more than 800 miles in diameter.

With regard to its Bottom—As the sea covers so great a part of the globe, we should, no doubt, by exploring its interior recesses, discover a vast number of interesting objects. So far as the bed of the ocean has been explored, it is found to bear a great resemblance to the surface of the dry land; being, like it, full of plains, caverns, rocks, and mountains, some of which are abrupt and almost perpendicular, while others rise with a gentle acclivity, and sometimes tower above the water, and form islands. The materials, too, which compose the bottom of the sea, are the same which form the basis of the dry land. It also resembles the land in another remarkable particular;—many fresh springs, and even rivers, rise out of it; an instance of which appears near Goa, on the western coast of Hindostan, and in the Mediterranean sea, not far from Marseilles. The sea sometimes assumes *different colors*. The materials which compose its bottom, cause it to reflect different hues in different places; and its appearance is also affected by the winds and by the sun, while the clouds that pass over it communicate all their varied and fleeting colors. When the sun shines, it is green; when he gleams through a fog, it is yellow; near the poles, it is black; while in the torrid zone, its color is often brown; and, on certain occasions, it assumes a luminous appearance, as if sparkling with fire.

The ocean has *three kinds of motions*. The first is that undulation which is produced by the wind, and which is entirely confined to its surface. It is now ascertained that this motion can be destroyed, and its surface rendered smooth by throwing oil upon its waves. The second motion is, that continual tendency which the whole water in the sea has towards the west, which is greater near the equator than towards the poles. It begins on the west side of America, where it is moderate; but as the waters advance westward, their motion is accelerated; and, after having traversed the globe, they return, and strike with great violence on the *eastern* shore of America. Being stopped by that continent, they rush, with impetuosity, into the Gulf of Mexico, thence they proceed along the coast of North America, till they come to the south side of the great bank of Newfoundland, when they turn off and run down through the Western Isles. This motion is most probably owing to the diurnal revolution of the earth on its axis,

which is in a direction contrary to the motion of the sea. The third motion of the sea is the *tide*, which is a regular swell of the ocean every 12½ hours. The motion is now ascertained to be owing to the attractive influence of the moon, and also partly to that of the sun. There is always a flux and reflux at the same time, in two parts of the globe, and these are opposite to each other; so that when our Antipodes have high water we have the same. When the attractive powers of the sun and moon act in the same direction, which happens at the time of new and full moon, we have the highest or *spring tides;* but when their attraction is opposed to each other, which happens at the quarters, we have the lowest, or *neap tides.*

Such is the ocean,—a most stupendous scene of Omnipotence, which forms the most magnificent feature of the globe we inhabit. When we stand on the sea-shore, and cast our eyes over the expanse of its waters, till the sky and the waves seem to mingle, all that the eye can take in at *one* survey, is but an inconsiderable *speck*, less than the hundred thousandth part of the whole of this vast abyss. If every drop of water can be divided into 26 millions of distinct parts, as some philosophers have demonstrated,* what an immense assemblage of watery particles must be contained in the unfathomable caverns of the ocean! Here the powers of calculation are completely set at defiance; and an image of infinity, immensity, and endless duration is presented to the mind. This mighty expanse of waters is the grand reservoir of nature, and the source of evaporation, which enriches the earth with fertility and verdure. Every cloud which floats in the atmosphere, and every fountain, and rivulet, and flowing stream are indebted to this inexhaustible source for those watery treasures which they distribute through every region of the land. In fine, whether we consider the ocean as rearing its tremendous billows in the midst of the tempest, or as stretched out into a smooth expanse—whether we consider its immeasurable extent, its mighty movements, or the innumerable beings which glide through its rolling waves—we cannot but be struck with astonishment at the grandeur of that Omnipotent Being who holds it waters "in the hollow of his hand," and who has said to its foaming surges, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

Rivers.—The next feature of the earth's surface which may be noticed, is, the rivers with which it is indented in every

* The demonstration of this proposition may be seen in Nieuwentyt's Rel. Philosopher, vol. iii. p. 852.

direction.—These are exceedingly numerous, and seem to form as essential a part in the constitution of our globe, as the mountains from which they flow, and as the ocean to which they direct their course. It is reckoned, that in the old continent, there are about 430 rivers which fall directly into the ocean, or into the Mediterranean and the Black seas ; but in the new continent, there are only about 145 rivers known, which fall directly into the sea. In this enumeration, however, only the great rivers are included, such as the Thames, the Danube, the Wolga, and the Rhone. Besides these, there are many thousands of streams of smaller dimensions, which, rising from the mountains, wind in every direction, till they fall into the large rivers, or are carried into the ocean. The largest rivers in Europe are—the Wolga, which, rising in the northern parts of Russia, runs a course of 1700 miles, till it falls into the Caspian sea—the Danube, whose course is 1300 miles, from the mountains in Switzerland to the Black sea—and the Don, which runs a course of 1200 miles. The greatest rivers in Asia are—the Hoanho, in China, whose course is 2400 miles—the Boorhampooter, the Euphrates, and the Ganges. The longest river in Africa, is the Nile, the course of which is estimated at 2000 miles. In the continent of America, the rivers appear to be formed on the grandest scale, both as to the length of their course, and the vast body of waters which they pour into the ocean. The Amazon, the largest river in the world, runs a course of above 3000 miles across the continent of South America, till it falls into the Atlantic ocean, where it discharges a body of waters 150 miles in breadth. Next to this is the river St. Lawrence, which is more than 2400 miles from its mouth through the lake of Ontario to the lake Alempigo and the Assiniboils ; and the rivers La Plata and Mississippi, each of whose courses is not less than 2000 miles.

When we consider the number and the magnitude of these majestic streams, it is evident that an enormous mass of water is continually pouring into the ocean, from every direction. From observations which have been made on the river Po, which runs through Lombardy, and waters a tract of land 380 miles long, and 120 broad, it is found, that it moves at the rate of four miles an hour, is 1000 feet broad, and 10 feet in depth, and consequently, supplies the sea with 5068 millions of cubical feet of water in a day, or a cubical mile in 29 days. On the supposition that the quantity of water which the sea receives from the great rivers in all countries, is proportional to the extent and surface of these countries, it will follow, that the

quantity of waters carried to the sea by all the other rivers on the globe, is 1083 times greater than that furnished by the Po, (supposing the land, as formerly stated, to contain about 49 millions of square miles,) and will supply the ocean with 13,630 cubical miles of water in a year. Now, reckoning the ocean, as formerly, to contain 296 millions of cubical miles of water, this last number, divided by the former, will give a quotient of 21,716. Hence it appears, that, were the ocean completely drained of its waters, it would require more than *twenty thousand years** before its caverns could be again completely filled by all the rivers in the world running into it at their present rate.

Here, two questions will naturally occur—Whence do the rivers receive so constant a supply of waters? and why has not the ocean long ago overflowed the world? since so prodigious a mass of water is continually flowing into its abyss. This was a difficulty which long puzzled philosophers; but it is now satisfactorily solved from a consideration of the effects of evaporation. By the heat of the sun the particles of water are drawn up into the atmosphere from the surface of the ocean, and float in the air in the form of clouds or vapor. These vapors are carried, by the winds, over the surface of the land, and are again condensed into water on the tops and the sides of mountains, which, gliding down into their crevices and caverns, at length break out into springs, a number of which meeting in one common valley becomes a river; and many of these united together at length form such streams as the Tay, the Thames, the Danube, and the Rhine. That evaporation is sufficient to account for this effect, has been demonstrated by many experiments and calculations. It is found that, from the surface of the Mediterranean sea, which contains 762,000 square miles, there are drawn up into the air, every day, by evaporation, 5280 millions of tons of water, while the rivers which flow into it yield only 1827 millions of tons in the same time; so that there is raised in vapor from the Mediterranean nearly *three times* the quantity of water which is poured into it by all its rivers. One third of this falls into the sea before it reaches the land; another part falls on the low lands, for the nourishment of plants; and the other third part is quite sufficient to supply the sources of all the

* Buffon makes this result to be 812 years, in which he is followed by Goldsmith, and most subsequent writers; but he proceeds on the false assumption, that the ocean covers only half the surface of the globe, and that it contains only 85 millions of square miles, and he estimates the average depth of the ocean to be only 440 yards, or one fourth of a mile.

rivers which run into the sea. This is in full conformity to what was long ago stated by an inspired Naturalist: "All the rivers run into the sea, and yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers came, thither do they return again," but, before they regain their former place, they make a circuit over our heads through the regions of the atmosphere.

Such are the varied movements and transformations which are incessantly going on in the rivers, the ocean, and the atmosphere, in order to preserve the balance of nature, and to supply the necessities of the animal and the vegetable tribes; all under the agency and direction of Him who "formed the sea and the dry land," and who has arranged all things in number, weight, and measure, to subserve the purposes of his will.

Rivers serve many important purposes in the economy of our globe. They carry off the redundant waters which fall in rains, or which ooze from the springs, which might otherwise settle into stagnant pools; they supply to the seas the loss of waters occasioned by their daily evaporation; they cool the air and give it a gentle circulation; they fertilize the countries through which they flow; their waters afford a wholesome drink, and the fishes they contain, a delicious food for the nourishment of man: they facilitate commerce, by conveying the productions of nature and art from the inland countries to the sea; they form mechanical powers for driving machinery of different kinds; they enliven and diversify the scenery of the countries through which they pass; and the cataracts which they frequently form among the mountains, present us with scenes the most picturesque and sublime; so that every part of the constitution of nature is rendered subservient both to utility and to pleasure.

Waving the consideration of other particulars, I shall simply state some of the artificial divisions of the earth, and two or three facts respecting its inhabitants.

The land has generally been divided into four parts, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, to which has been lately added the division called Australasia, which comprehends New Holland, New Guinea, New Zealand, Van Dieman's land, and several other islands in the Pacific ocean. *Europe* comprehends the following countries, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Prussia, Germany, Austria, Turkey, Italy, Switzerland, France, Holland, or the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain and Ireland, together with the islands of Sicily, Malta, Candia, Corsica, Sardinia, Majorca, Minorca, Ivica, Zealand, Funen, Gothland, Iceland, and several others of smaller note.—*Asia*, the largest and most popu-

ious division of the ancient continent, contains the Empires of China and Japan, Chinese Tartary, Thibet, Hindostan, or British India, the Birman Empire, Persia, Arabia, Turkey in Asia, Siberia, Independent Tartary, and a variety of territories inhabited by tribes with which we are very imperfectly acquainted; together with the immense islands of Borneo, Sumatra, Java, Ceylon, Segalien, the Phillippines, and thousands of others of smaller dimensions. It was in Asia where the human race was first planted; it became the nursery of the world after the universal deluge, and it was the scene in which the most memorable transactions recorded in the sacred history took place. But its inhabitants are now immersed in Mahometan and Pagan darkness; and the Christian religion, except in a few insulated spots, is almost unknown among its vast population. It is the richest and most fruitful part of the world, and produces cotton, silks, spices, tea, coffee, gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and precious stones: but despotism, in its worst forms, reigns uncontrolled, over every part of this immense region.

Africa comprehends the following kingdoms,—Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt, Zaara, Negroland, Guinea, Nubia, Abyssinia, Caffraria, Dahomy, Benin, Congo, Angola, and various other territories. By far the greater part of Africa remains hitherto unexplored, and, consequently, we are possessed of a very slender portion of information respecting the numerous tribes that may inhabit it. This quarter of the world, which once contained several flourishing kingdoms and states, is now reduced to a general state of barbarism. That most abominable traffic. the slave trade, is carried on to an unlimited extent on its western coasts, by a set of European ruffians, whose villanies are a disgrace to human nature. Its most striking features are those immense deserts, near its northern parts, which comprise nearly one third of its surface. The deserts of Zaara are 1500 miles long, and 800 broad.

America is divided into North and South. It remained unknown to the inhabitants of the Eastern Hemisphere till the year 1492, when it was discovered by Columbus, who first landed on Guanahani, or *Cat Island*, one of the Bahama isles. North America comprehends the following countries: The United States, New and Old Mexico, Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Labrador. South America comprehends the immense districts called Terra Firma, Peru, Guiana, Amazonia, Paraguay, Brazil, Chili, and Patagonia.—Between N. and S. America lie the islands of Cuba, St. Domingo, Jamaica, and Porto Rico, known by the name of the *West Indies*. Besides these, there are connected

with America, the Bahama, and Carribbee islands, Newfound land, Cape Breton, Tobago, Trinidad, Terra del Fuego, &c America is distinguished by its numerous and extensive lakes, which resemble large inland seas. Its rivers, also, form one of its grand and distinguishing features, being the largest on the globe. It is likewise diversified with lofty and extensive ranges of mountains. When first discovered it was almost wholly covered with immense forests, and thinly peopled with a number of savage tribes. Its mingled population of Aborigines and Europeans, is now making rapid advances in know ledge, civilization, and commerce.

In regard to the *human inhabitants* that occupy the different regions now specified—they have been divided by some geographers into the six following classes—1. The dwarfish inhabitants of the polar regions; as the Laplanders, the Greenlanders, and the Esquimaux.—2. The flat-nosed olive-colored tawny race; as the Tartars, the Chinese, and the Japanese.—3. The blacks of Asia with European features. Of this description are the Hindoos, the Birmans, and the inhabitants of the islands in the Indian ocean.—4. The woolly-haired negroes of Africa, distinguished by their *black* color, their flat noses, and their thick lips.—5. The copper-colored native Americans, distinguished likewise by their black hair, small black eyes, high cheek bones, and flat noses.—6. The sixth variety is the white European nations, as the British, the French, the Italians, and the Germans.

The *number of inhabitants* which people the earth at one time may be estimated to amount to at least *eight hundred millions;* of which 500 millions may be assigned to Asia; 80 millions to Africa; 70 millions to America; and 150 millions to Europe.—With regard to their religion, they may be estimated as follows

Pagans, . . .	490,000,000
Mahometans, . .	130,000,000
Roman Catholics, .	100,000,000
Protestants, . . .	43,000,000
Greeks and Arminians,	30,000,000
Jews, ...	7,000,000
	800,000,000

From this estimate it appears, that there are more than 4 Pagans and Mahometans to 1 Christian, and only one Protestant to 17 of all the other denominations. Although all the Roman Catholics, Greeks, and Protestants were reckoned true Christians, there still remain more than 620 millions of our fellow men ignorant of the true God, and of his will as

revealed in the Sacred Scriptures; which shows what a vast field of exertion still lies open to Christian benevolence, before the blessings of civilization, mental improvement, rational liberty, and Christianity be fully communicated to the Pagan and Mahometan world.

If we suppose that the earth, at an average, has always been as populous as it is now, and that it contains 800 millions of inhabitants, as above stated, and if we reckon 32 years for a generation, at the end of which period the whole human race is renewed; it will follow, that 145 thousand millions of human beings have existed on the earth since the present system of our globe commenced, reckoning 5829 years from Adam to the present time.* And, consequently, if mankind had never died, there would have been 182 times the present number of the earth's inhabitants now in existence. It follows from this statement, that 25 millions of mankind die every year, 2853 every hour, and 47 every minute, and that at least an equal number, during these periods, are emerging from non-existence to the stage of life; so that almost every moment, a rational and immortal being is ushered into the world, and another is transported to the invisible state. Whether, therefore, we contemplate the world of matter, or the world of mind, we perceive incessant changes and revolutions going on, which are gradually carrying forward the earth and its inhabitants to some important consummation.—If we suppose, that, before the close of time, as many human beings will be brought into existence, as have already existed, during the by-past ages of the world, there will, of course, be found at the general resurrection, 290,000,000,000 of mankind. Vast as such an assemblage would be, the whole of the human beings here supposed, allowing 6 square feet for every individual, could be assembled within the space of 62,400 square miles, or on a tract of land not much larger than that of England, which contains, according to the most accurate calculation, above 50,000 square miles.

* This calculation proceeds on the supposition, that only 4004 years elapsed between the Mosaic Creation and the birth of Christ, according to the Hebrew Chronology. But Dr. Hales, in his late work on Scripture Chronology, has proved, almost to a demonstration, that, from the Creation to the birth of Christ are to be reckoned 5411 years; and this computation nearly agrees with the Samaritan and Septuagint Chronology, and with that of Josephus. According to this computation, 7235 years are to be reckoned from the Creation to the present time; and, consequently, 220 thousand millions of human beings will have existed since the Creation, which is more than 226 times the number of inhabitants presently existing.

Our world is capable of sustaining a much greater number of inhabitants than has ever yet existed upon it at any one time. And since we are informed in the Sacred Oracles, that God "created it not in vain, but *formed it to be* inhabited," we have reason to believe, that, in future ages, when the physical and moral energies of mankind shall be fully exerted, and when Peace shall wave her olive branch over the nations, the earth will be much more populous than it has ever been, and those immense deserts, where ravenous animals now roam undisturbed, will be transformed into scenes of fertility and beauty. If it be admitted, that the produce of 12 acres of land is sufficient to maintain a family consisting of six persons, and if we reckon only one-fourth of the surface of the globe capable of cultivation, it can be proved, that the earth could afford sustenance for 16,000 millions of inhabitants, or *twenty times the number* that is presently supposed to exist. So that we have no reason to fear that the world will be overstocked with inhabitants for many ages to come; or that a period may soon arrive when the increase of population will surpass the means of subsistence, as some of the disciples of Malthus have lately insinuated. To suppose, as some of these gentlemen seem to do, that wars and diseases, poverty and pestilence, are necessary evils, in order to prevent the increase of the human race beyond the means of subsistence which nature can afford—while the immense regions of New Holland, New Guinea, Borneo, and the greater part of Africa and America are almost destitute of inhabitants—is both an insult on the dignity of human nature, and a reflection on the wisdom and beneficence of Divine Providence. The Creator is benevolent and bountiful, and "his tender mercies are over all his works;" but man, by his tyranny, ambition, and selfishness, has counteracted the streams of Divine beneficence, and introduced into the social state, poverty, disorder, and misery, with all their attendant train of evils; and it is not before such demoralizing principles be in some measure eradicated, and the principles of Christian benevolence brought into active operation, that the social state of man will be greatly meliorated, and the bounties of heaven fully enjoyed by the human race. If, in the present deranged state of the social and political world, it be found difficult, in any particular country, to find sustenance for its inhabitants, emigration is the obvious and natural remedy; and the rapid emigrations which are now taking place to the Cape of Good Hope, New Holland, Van Dieman's Land, and America, are, doubtless, a part of those arrangements of Providence, by

which the Creator will accomplish his designs, in peopling the desolate wastes of our globe, and promoting the progress of knowledge, and of the true religion among the scattered tribes of mankind.

With that branch of knowledge to which I have now adverted, every individual of the human race ought to be in some measure acquainted. For it is unworthy of the dignity of a rational being, to stalk abroad on the surface of the earth, and enjoy the bounty of his Creator, without considering the nature and extent of his sublunary habitation, the variety of august objects it contains, the relation in which he stands to other tribes of intelligent agents, and the wonderful machinery which is in constant operation for supplying his wants, and for producing the revolutions of day and night, spring and autumn, summer and winter.—In a religious point of view, Geography is a science of peculiar interest. For "the salvation of God," which Christianity unfolds, is destined to be proclaimed in every land, in order that men of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues may participate in its blessings. But, without exploring every region of the earth, and the numerous islands which are scattered over the surface of the ocean, and opening up a regular intercourse with the different tribes of human beings which dwell upon its surface, we can never carry into effect the purpose of God, by "making known his salvation to the ends of the earth."—As God has ordained, that "all flesh shall see the salvation" he has accomplished, and that human beings shall be the agents for carrying his designs into effect—so, we may rest assured, that he has ordained every mean requisite for accomplishing this end; and, consequently, that it is his will that men should study the figure and magnitude of the earth, and all those arts by which they may be enabled to traverse and explore the different regions of land and water, which compose the terraqueous globe—and that it is also his will, that every one who feels an interest in the present and eternal happiness of his fellow-men, should make himself acquainted with the result of all the discoveries in this science that have been, or may yet be made, in order to stimulate his activity, in conveying to the wretched sons of Adam, wherever they may be found, "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

To the Missionary, and the Directors of Bible and Missionary Societies, a minute and comprehensive knowledge of this science, and of all the facts connected with it, is essen-

tially requisite ; without which they would often grope in the dark, and spend their money in vain, and " their labour for that which doth not profit." They must be intimately acquainted with the extensive field of operation which lies before them, and with the physical, the moral, and the political state of the different tribes to which they intend to send the message of salvation ; otherwise their exertions will be made at random, and their schemes be conducted without judgment or discrimination. To attempt to direct the movements of Missionary Societies, without an intimate knowledge of this subject, is as foolish and absurd as it would be for a land-surveyor to lay down plans for the improvement of a gentleman's estate, before he had surveyed the premises, and made himself acquainted with the objects upon them, in their various aspects, positions, and bearings. If all those who direct and support the operations of such societies, were familarly acquainted with the different fields for missionary exertions, and with the peculiar state and character of the diversified tribes of the heathen world, so far as they are known, injudicious schemes might be frustrated before they are carried into effect, and the funds of such institutions preserved from being wasted to no purpose. In this view, it is the duty of every Christian, to mark the progress and the results of the various geographical expeditions which are now going forward in quest of discoveries, in connection with the moral and political movements which are presently agitating the nations : for every navigator, who ploughs the ocean in search of new islands and continents, and every traveller who explores the interior of unknown countries, should be considered as so many pioneers, sent beforehand, by Divine Providence, to prepare the way for the labors of the missionary, and for the combined exertions of Christian benevolence.*

* On this subject, the Author feels great pleasure in referring his readers to a small volume, lately published, by James Douglas, Esq. of Cavers, entitled, " Hints on Missions,"—a work which deserves the attentive perusal, both of the philosopher, the politician, and the Christian, and particularly of the Directors of Missionary Societies ; and which is characterized by a spirit of enlightened philanthropy, and *a condensation of thought*, which has seldom been equalled in the discussion of such topics. It concentrates, as it were, into a focus, the light which has been reflected from hundreds of volumes ; and the original hints it suggests, claim the serious consideration of the superintendents of missionary schemes ; without an attention to some of which, the beneficial effects resulting from such undertakings will be few and unimportant.—Should this note happen to strike the eye of the worthy Author, it is submitted, with all due deference, whether a more extensive circulation of the substance of this volume, in a less expensive form, and with a few modifications, to bring it within the

But even to every private Christian, Geography is an interesting branch of study, without some knowledge of which his prayers and his Christian sympathies cannot be judiciously and extensively directed. We occasionally hear the ministers of religion, at the commencement of public worship, on the first day of the week, imploring the Divine blessing on their brethren throughout the Christian church, who are commencing the same exercises; and at the close of worship in the afternoon, that the same blessing may seal the instructions which have been delivered in all the churches of the saints; as if all the public religious services of the universal church were, at that moment, drawing to a close. This is all very well, so far as it goes: the expression of such benevolent wishes is highly becoming and congenial to the spirit of Christianity. But a very slight acquaintance with Geographical science will teach us, that, when we in this country are commencing the religious services of the first day of the week, our Christian brethren in the East Indies, who live under a very different meridian, have finished theirs; those in Russia, Poland, Greece, Palestine, and on the banks of the Caspian sea, have performed one half of their public religious worship and instructions; and those in New Holland and Van Dieman's Land have retired to rest, at the close of their Sabbath. On the other hand, our friends in the West India Islands and in America, at the close of our worship, are only about to commence the public instructions of the Christian Sabbath. If, then, it be submitted, that our prayers, in certain cases, ought to be *specific*, to have a reference to the particular cases and relations of certain classes of individuals, there can be no valid reason assigned, why they should not have a reference to the geographical positions of the different portions of the Christian Church, as well as to those who live on or near our own meridian: that, for example, in the beginning of our public devotions, we might implore that the blessing of God may accompany the instructions which have been delivered in the Eastern parts of the world; and at the close of worship, that the same agency may direct in the exercises of those in the Western hemisphere, who are about to enter on the sacred services of that day. On the same principle, we may perceive the absurdity of those "*concerts*"* for prayer in different places *at the*

range of thought possessed by general readers, would not have a tendency to promote its benevolent objects.

* The author does not seem to mean, that it is *absurd* for Christians in every part of the earth to assemble on the same day in their respective places of devotion, to pray for a universal extension of christianity. This objec-

same hour, which were lately proposed, and attempted by a certain portion of the religious world. Even within the limits of Europe, this could not be attempted, with the prospect of Christians joining in devotion at one and the same time; for, when it is six o'clock in one part of Europe, it is eight at another, and five o'clock at a third place; much less could such a concert take place throughout Europe, Asia, and America. So that science, and a calm consideration of the nature and relations of things, may teach us to preserve our devotional fervor and zeal within the bounds of reason and propriety; and, at the same time, to direct our reflections, and our Christian sympathies, to take a wider range than that to which they are usually confined.

Besides the considerations now suggested, a serious contemplation of the physical objects and movements which this science exhibits, has a tendency to excite pious and reverential emotions. To contemplate this huge globe of land and water, flying with rapidity through the voids of space, conveying its vast population from one region to another, at the rate of fifteen hundred thousand miles in a day, and whirling round its axis at the same time, to produce the constant succession of day and night,—to contemplate the lofty ridges of mountains that stretch around it in every direction; the flaming volcanoes; the roaring cataracts; the numerous rivers, incessantly rolling their watery treasures into the seas; the majestic ocean, and its unfathomable caverns; the vapors rising from its surface, and replenishing the springs and rivers; the avalanche hurling down the mountain's side with a noise like thunder; the luxuriant plains of the torrid zone; the rugged cliffs and icebergs of the polar regions; and thousands of other objects of diversified beauty and sublimity,—has an evident tendency to expand the conceptions of the human mind, to increase its sources of rational enjoyment, and to elevate the affections to that All-Powerful Being who gave birth to all the sublimities of Nature, and who incessantly superintends all its movements.

In fine, from the numerous *moral* facts, which Geography unfolds, we learn the vast depth and extent of that moral degradation into which the human race has fallen—the ferocious tempers, and immoral practices, which are displayed in the regions of Pagan idolatry—the horrid cruelties, the vile abominations, that are daily perpetrated under the sanction of what

tion would lie with equal weight against the sabbath. His only objection appears to be against the *supposition*, that christians, meeting in different parts of the earth at the same hour of the day, are praying in all places *at the same moment*.—*American Editor*.

is termed religion—the wide extent of population, over which the prince of darkness sways his sceptre—the difficulties which require to be surmounted before the "Gospel of salvation" can extend its full influence throughout the Pagan world—and the vast energies which are requisite to accomplish this glorious event. All these portions of information are calculated to confirm and illustrate the Scriptural doctrine of the universal depravity of man—to exercise the faith of the Christian, on the promises of Jehovah, in reference to the conversion of the benighted nations—to rouse his sympathies towards his degraded brethren of mankind, to excite his intercession in their behalf, and to direct his benevolence and activity, in devising and executing schemes for enlightening the people who are sitting "in darkness, and in the shadow of death."

GEOLOGY.

Another subject intimately related to the former, is, the science of Geology.

This science has for its object, to investigate and describe the *internal structure* of the earth, the arrangement of the materials of which it is composed, the circumstances peculiar to its original formation, the different states under which it has existed, and the various changes which it appears to have undergone, since the Almighty created the substance of which it is composed. From a consideration of the vast quantity of materials contained in the internal structure of our globe, and of the limited extent to which men can carry their operations, when they attempt to penetrate into its bowels, it is obvious, that our knowledge of this subject must be very shallow and imperfect. The observations, however, which have been made on the structure of our globe during the last half century, and the conclusions deduced from them, are highly interesting, both to the philosopher, and to the Christian. Before the facts, on which this branch of Natural History is founded, were accurately ascertained, a variety of objections to the Mosaic history of the creation was started by certain sceptical philosophers, founded on partial and erroneous views of the real structure and economy of the earth. But it is now found, that the more accurately and minutely the system of nature is explored, the more distinctly do we perceive the harmony that subsists between the records of Revelation, and the operations of the Creator, in the material world. If both be admitted as the effects of the agency of the same Almighty and Eternal Being, they must, in the nature of things, completely har-

monize, and can never be repugnant to each other—whether we be capable, in every instance, of perceiving their complete coincidence, or not. If any facts could be produced in the visible creation which directly contradict the records of the Bible, it would form a proof, that the oracles which we hold as Divine, were not dictated by the Creator and Governor of the universe. But, although some garbled facts have been triumphantly exhibited in this view, it is now ascertained, from the discoveries which have been lately made in relation to the structure and formation of the earth, that the truth of the facts detailed in Sacred History, rests on a solid and immutable basis; and that the Supreme Intelligence who arranged the fabric of heaven and earth, and he alone, communicated to the inspired writers the doctrines, and the facts they have recorded; and, we have reason to believe, that as Geologists proceed in their researches and investigations, still more sensible proofs of the authenticity of Revelation will be brought to light.

Geology has, of late, become an interesting object of inquiry to the student of general science, and is now prosecuted with ardor by many distinguished philosophers. The observations which have been made in various parts of the world, by late navigators; the facts which have been ascertained by Pallas, Saussure, De Luc, Humboldt, and other intelligent travellers; and the discoveries which have been brought to light by modern chemists and mineralogists, have all conspired to facilitate Geological inquiries, to render them more enlightened and satisfactory, and to prepare the way for future ages establishing a rational, scriptural, and substantial theory of the earth. The man who engages in such inquiries has always at hand a source of rational investigation and enjoyment. The ground on which he treads—the aspect of the surrounding country—the mines, the caves, and the quarries which he explores—every new country in which he travels, every mountain he climbs, and every new surface of the earth that is laid open to his inspection, offer to him novel and interesting stores of information. On descending into mines, we are not only gratified by displays of human ingenuity, but we also acquire views of the strata of the earth, and of the revolutions it has undergone since the period of its formation.—Our researches on the surface of the earth, amidst abrupt precipices and lofty mountains, introduce us to the grandest and most sublime works of the Creator, and present to our view the effects of stupendous forces, which have overturned mountains. and rent the foundations of nature. "In the midst of

such scenes, the Geologist feels his mind invigorated; the magnitude of the appearances before him extinguishes all the little and contracted notions he may have formed in the closet; and he learns, that it is only by visiting and studying those stupendous works, that he can form an adequate conception of the great relations of the crust of the globe, and of its mode of formation."*

The upper crust, or surface of the earth, is found to be composed of different *strata*, or beds placed one above another. These strata, or layers, are very much mixed, and their direction, matter, thickness, and relative position, vary considerably in different places. These strata are divided into seven classes, as follows :—black earth, clay, sandy earth, marl, bog, chalk, and scabeous or stony earth. The surface of the globe, considered in relation to its inequalities, is divided into Highland, Lowland, and the bottom of the sea. Highland comprises Alpine land, composed of mountain groups, or series of mountain chains: Lowland comprises those extensive flat tracts which are almost entirely destitute of small mountain groups. To the bottom of the sea belong the flat, rocky bottom, shoals, reefs, and islands.

At first sight, the solid mass of the earth appears to be a confused assemblage of rocky masses, piled on each other without regularity or order, where none of those admirable displays of skill and contrivance are to be observed, which so powerfully excite attention in the structure of animals and vegetables. But, on a nearer and more intimate view, a variety of beautiful arrangements has been traced by the industry of Geologists, and the light of modern discoveries; by which they have been enabled to classify these apparant irregularities of nature. The materials of which the solid crust of the earth is composed, have been arranged into the four following classes :—1. Those rocks which contain neither any animal nor vegetable remains themselves, nor are intermixed with rocks which do contain them, and are therefore termed *Primitive*, or *Primary* rocks; the period of whose formation is considered as antecedent to that of the creation of organic beings. These are granite, gnesis, mica slate, and clay slate, which occur abundantly in all regions of the globe, with quartz rock, serpentine, granular limestone, &c. which occur more sparingly.—2. Rocks containing organic remains, or generally associated with other rocks in which such substances are found, and which, as having been formed posterior to the existence of organized

* Edinburgh Encyclop. Art. *Mineralogy.*

beings, are termed *Secondary*. These are greywacke, sandstone, limestone, and gypsum of various kinds, slate clay, with certain species of trap; and they are found lying above the primary or older rocks.—3. Above these secondary rocks, beds of gravel, sand, earth, and moss, are found, which have been termed *Alluvial rocks*, or *Formations*. This class comprehends those rocky substances formed from previously existing rocks, of which the materials have been broken down by the agency of water and air; they are therefore generally loose in their texture, and are never covered with any real solid and rocky secondary strata.—4. *Volcanic rocks;* under which class are comprehended all those rocks, beds of lava, scoriæ, and other matter thrown out at certain points of the earth's surface by the action of subterraneous fire.

"The phenomena of Geology show, that the original formation of the rocks has been accompanied, in nearly all its stages, by a process of waste, decay, and recomposition. The rocks, as they were successively deposited, were acted upon by air and water, heat, &c. broken into fragments, or worn down into grains, out of which new strata were formed. Even the newer secondary rocks, since their consolidation, have been subject to great changes, of which very distinct monuments remain. Thus, we have single mountains which, from their structure, can be considered only as remnants of great formations, or of great continents no longer in existence. Mount Meisner, in Hesse, six miles long and three broad, rises about 1800 feet above its base, and 2100 above the sea, overtopping all the neighbouring hills from 40 to 50 miles round. The lowest part of the mountain consists of the same shell, limestone, and sandstone, which exist in the adjacent country. Above these are, first, a bed of sand, then a bed of fossil wood, 100 feet thick at some points, and the whole is covered by a mass of basalt, 500 feet in height. On considering these facts, it is impossible to avoid concluding, that this mountain which now overtops the neighbouring country, occupied at one time, the bottom of a cavity in the midst of higher lands. The vast mass of fossil wood could not all have grown there, but must have been transported by water from a more elevated surface, and lodged in what was then a hollow. The basalt which covers the wood must also have flowed in a current from a higher site; but the soil over which both the wood and the basalt passed, has been swept away leaving this mountain as a solitary memorial to attest its existence. Thus, also, on the side of Mount Jura next the Alps, where no other mountain interposes, there are found vast

blocks of granite (some of 1000 cubic yards) at the height of more than 2000 feet above the Lake of Geneva. These blocks are foreign to the rocks among which they lie, and have evidently come from the opposite chain of the Alps; but the land which constituted the inclined plane over which they were rolled or transported, has been worn away, and the valley of lower Switzerland, with its lakes, now occupies its place. Transported masses of primitive rocks, of the same description, are found scattered over the north of Germany which Van Buch ascertained by their characters to belong to the mountains of Scandinavia; and which, therefore, carry us back to a period when an elevated continent, occupying the basin of the Baltic, connected Saxony with Norway.—*Supp to Ency. Brit.* vol. 6.

The production of a bed for *vegetation* is effected by the decomposition of rocks. This decomposition is effected by the expansion of water in the pores or fissures of rocks, by heat or congelation—by the solvent power of moisture—and by electricity, which is known to be a powerful agent of decomposition. As soon as the rock begins to be softened, the seeds of *lichens*, which are constantly floating in the air, make it their resting place. Their generations occupy it till a finely divided earth is formed, which becomes capable of supporting mosses and heath; acted upon by light and heat, these plants imbibe the dew, and convert constituent parts of the air into nourishment. Their death and decay afford food for a more perfect species of vegetable; and, at length, a mould is formed, in which even the trees of the forest can fix their roots, and which is capable of rewarding the labors of the cultivator. The decomposition of rocks tends to the *renovation* of soils, as well as their cultivation. Finely divided matter is carried by rivers from the higher districts to the low countries, and alluvial lands are usually extremely fertile. By these operations, the quantity of habitable surface is constantly increased; precipitous cliffs are generally made gentle slopes, lakes are filled up, and islands are formed at the mouths of great rivers; so that as the world grows older, its capacity for containing an increased number of inhabitants is gradually enlarging.

Of all the memorials of the past history of our globe, the most interesting are those myriads of remains of organized bodies which exist in the interior of its outer crusts. In these, we find traces of innumerable orders of beings existing under different circumstances, succeeding one another at distant epochs, and varying through multiplied changes of form. "If we examine the secondary rocks, beginning with the most

ancient, the first organic remains which present themselves, are those of aquatic plants and large reeds, but of species different from ours. To these succeed madrepores, encrenities, and other aquatic zoophites, living beings of the simplest forms which remain attached to one spot, and partake, in some degree, of the nature of vegetables. Posterior to these, are ammonites, and other mollusci, still very simple in their forms, and entirely different from any animals now known. After these, some fishes appear ; and plants, consisting of bamboos and ferns, increase, but still different from those which exist. In the next period, along with an increasing number of extinct species of shells and fishes, we meet with amphibious and viviparous quadrupeds, such as crocodiles and tortoises, and some reptiles, as serpents, which show, that dry land now existed. As we approach the newest of the solid rock formations, we find lamantins, phocæ, and other cetaceous and mammiferous sea animals, with some birds. And in the newest of these formations, we find the remains of herbiferous land animals of extinct species, the paleotherium, anaplotherium, &c. and of birds, with some fresh water shells. In the lowest beds of loose soil, and in peat bogs, are found the remains of the elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, elk, &c. of different species from those which now exist, but belonging to the same genera. Lastly, the bones of the species which are apparently the same with those now existing alive, are never found except in the very latest alluvial depositions, or those which are either formed in the sides of rivers, the bottoms of ancient lakes and marshes now dried up, in peat beds, in the fissures and caverns of certain rocks, or at small depths below the present surface, in places where they may have been overwhelmed by debris, or even buried by man. Human bones are never found except among those of animal species now living, and in situations which show, that they have been comparatively speaking, recently deposited."—*Supp. to Ency. Brit.* vol. 6.

More than thirty different species of animals have been found embedded in the secondary strata—no living examples of which are now to be found in any quarter of the globe. Among the most remarkable of these are the following.—1. The *Mammoth*, which bears a certain resemblance to the Elephant, but is much larger, and differs considerably in the size and form of the tusks, jaws, and grinders. The fossil remains of this animal are more abundant in Siberia than in other countries ; there being scarcely a spot, from the river Don to Kamtschatka, in which they have not been found.

Not only single bones and perfect skeletons of this animal are frequently to be met with; but, in a late instance, the whole animal was found preserved in ice. This animal was discovered on the banks of the frozen ocean, near the mouth of the river Jena, in 1799; and in 1805, Mr. Adams got it conveyed over a space of 7000 miles to Petersburgh, where it is deposited in the Museum. The flesh, skin, and hair were completely preserved, and even the eyes were entire. It was provided with a long mane, and the body was covered with hair. This hair was of different qualities. There were stiff black bristles from 12 to 15 inches long, and these belonged to the tail, mane, and ears. Other bristles were from 9 to 10 inches long, and of a brown color; and besides these, there was a coarse wool, from 3 to 5 inches long, of a pale yellow color. This mammoth was a male: it measured 9 feet 4 inches in height, and was 16 feet 4 inches long, without including the tusks. The tusks, measuring along the curve, are 9 feet 6 inches; and the two together weigh 360 lbs. avoirdupois. The head alone without the tusks, weighs 414 lbs. avoirdupois. The remains of this animal have been found likewise in Iceland, Norway, Scotland, England, and in many places through the continent onwards to the Arctic ocean.

2. The *Megatherium*. A complete skeleton of this colossal species was found in diluvial soil, near Buenos Ayres, and sent to Madrid, The specimen is 14 feet long, and 7 Spanish feet in height.

3. The great *Mastodon* of the Ohio. This species appears to have been as tall as the elephant, but with longer and thicker limbs. It had tusks like the elephant, and appears to nave lived on roots. Its remains abound in America, particularly on the banks of the Ohio.

4. The *Tapir*, which also abounds in America. The one named *Gigantic Tapir*, is about 18 feet long, and 12 feet nigh.

5. The *Irish Elk*, or Elk of the Isle of Man. This gigantic species, now apparently extinct, occurs in a fossil state, in Ireland, Isle of Man, England, Germany, and France. The most perfect specimen of this species, which was found in the Isle of Man, may be seen in the Museum of the University of Edinburgh. It is 6 feet high, 9 feet long, and in height to the tip of the right horn, 9 feet 7½ inches. An engraving of this skeleton may be seen in vol. 6 of *Supp. to Ency. Brit.*

From a consideration of the phenomena above described, Geologists have been led to conclude, "that rocks now buried

at a great depth, constituted, at one time, the surface of continents, and the seat of organic life; and that many orders of beings have been called into existence, and afterwards destroyed by great revolutions, which introduced new classes of mineral deposits, accompanied with new tribes of organic beings." It has also been concluded by some, that the appearance of Man upon the face of the globe, is, geologically speaking, a very recent event; before which the earth had been inhabited thousand of years by various families of plants and tribes of animals, which had been destroyed and renewed in a long series of successions. Whether these conclusions be *necessary inferences* from the phenomena of organic remains and other geological facts, I shall not, at present, stop to inquire. It is sufficient for the Christian Philosopher to show, that, though they should be admitted in their full extent, they are not inconsistent with the records of Sacred History, as some divines have been disposed to maintain. Though it could be proved to a demonstration, that the *materials* of which the present system of our globe is composed, have existed for millions of years, it would not, in the least, invalidate the Mosaic account of the arrangement of our world. For Moses no where affirms, that the *materials* or *substance* of the earth, were created, or brought from nothing into existence, *at the period* when his history commences. His language, on the contrary, evidently implies, that the materials which enter into the constitution of our globe *did exist*, at the epoch at which he commences his narration. "The earth *was* without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep." This passage plainly implies the following things—1. That the original atoms, or materials, out of which the terraqueous globe, in its present state, was formed, were then *in existence*, or, had been previously created. *How long* they had been in existence is not stated. We may suppose them to have existed for a year, a thousand years, or a million of years, just as geological phenomena seem to warrant, without in the least invalidating the authority of the Sacred Historian, who states nothing contrary to the truth of either supposition. 2. That the materials of our globe, as then existing, were in a *chaotic* state. Instead of that order and beauty which we perceive on the face of nature, the whole mass presented a scene of confusion and disorder—such a scene, perhaps, as would be presented, were the earth stripped of its verdure, were its strata universally disrupted, its mountains hurled into the plains, and its rivers and seas, by some terrible convulsion, to forsake their ancient channels. 3. The

passage seems to imply, that the whole, or the greater portion of the earth, as it then existed, was covered with a deluge of water: "Darkness covered the face of the *deep*," or the *abyss*.

Such was the state of the terrestrial system at the period when Moses commences his narration; no intimation being given of the period of its duration in this condition; and, consequently, nothing asserted to militate against any geological system which is founded on the facts which have been discovered respecting the organic remains which are found in the strata of our globe. It is a mistake into which too many have been apt to fall, to suppose, that Moses begins his history *at the period* when the first portions of material existence were created out of nothing; and that it was his design to mark the *precise epoch* when the whole assemblage of created beings throughout the universe was brought into existence.—His primary, if not his sole intention evidently was, to detail the progress of those arrangements by which the earth was gradually reduced to that form and order in which we now behold it, from the chaotic materials which previously existed. And, as an emphatic and appropriate introduction to his narration, he states this important truth: "In the begining God created the heaven and the earth." This passage, being of a general and comprehensive nature, decides nothing with regard to the *period*, or precise epoch, at which the different bodies in the universe were called into being; but is evidently intended to convey the following important truth, in opposion to all fanciful, chimerical, and atheistical notions respecting the origin of the world; namely, "That, at what period soever, in the lapse of duration, any object was brought into existence, it derived that existence from the God of Israel, the self-existent and Eternal Jehovah." "In the beginning *God* created the heaven and the earth." As the language of the Sacred Historian, therefore, decides nothing with regard to *time*—to limit the creation of every portion of the material system within the period of six thousand years, is to make an unnecessary concession to the infidel philosopher, which may afterwards be found inconsistent with certain facts which exist in the material world.

But, whatever may be said with respect to the state and duration of the earth prior to the period at which Moses commences his narration, it is admitted by every geologist, that our globe, *as to its present form and arrangement*, has been, comparatively, of but short duration. Cuvier, one of the most enlightened geologists of the age, deduces, from certain

progressive changes on the earth's surface, as well as from the concurrent traditions of many nations, that the first appearance of man upon the face of the globe, or, at least, the renewal of the human race after some great catastrophe, cannot be referred to a period farther back than 5000, or 6000 years from the present time. Geologists, too, of every description, however different the systems or theories they have adopted, have all been constrained, from the evidence of fact, to admit this conclusion, "*That every part of the dry land was once covered by the ocean;*" thus confirming the scriptural account of that stupendous event, *the universal deluge*. This event, from its very nature, must have been accompanied with the most terrible convulsions, both on the exterior surface, and in the interior strata of the globe. Accordingly we find, that traces of this awful catastrophe exist in every region of the earth. Mr. Parkinson describes the whole island of Great Britain, as having, since its completion, "suffered considerable disturbance from some prodigious and mysterious power. By this power all the known strata, to the greatest depths that have been explored, have been more or less broken and displaced, and, in some places, have been so lifted, that some of the lowest of them have been raised to the surface; while portions of others, to a very considerable depth and extent, have been entirely carried away." The whole of the Alpine region in Switzerland, and the North of Italy, considered as one mass, shows the most evident marks of dislocation. At the height of 3500 feet above the level of the sea, M. Saussure met with a chasm a hundred feet wide, and so deep that he saw no bottom. All travellers on the Alps have regarded them with horror. They mark the most evident convulsions, but show no signs of having been occasioned by attrition. Mr. Townsend, speaking of the Pyrenees, which he personally inspected, says, "What is most remarkable is, to see four enormous chasms, almost perpendicular, which divided both mountains and their valleys, and which appear as if they had just been rent asunder." Throughout the ranges of the Andes, and in every other mountainous region, similar chasms and disruptions, indicating the former operation of some tremendous power, are frequently observed by those who visit such scenes of grandeur.—In some of the coal mines in our own country, the coal is in some places lifted up, or thrown down several hundreds of feet from the places it appears originally to have occupied. "Two miles north of Newcastle," says Mr. Townsend, "one great *dyke* or *fault* throws down the coal 540 feet

—at the distance of 3 miles, it is cut off and thrown down again 240 feet."

An evidence of the effects which could be produced only by a general deluge, is also afforded by those organic remains to which I have already adverted, and particularly by those immense quantities of *marine shells*, which have been discovered in situations so elevated, and in places so far removed from the sea, as to prove that they were left there by a flood extening over the whole globe. At Touraine, in France, a hundred miles from the sea, is a bed of shells stretching 9 leagues in extent, and 20 feet in depth, and including shells not known to belong to the neighbouring sea. Humboldt found sea shells on the Andes at an elevation of 14,120 feet above the level of the sea. The slaty mountain of La Bolca, near Verona, is famous for petrifactions, among which are enumerated more than one hundred species of fish, natives of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, *here assembled in one place.*

It appears, therefore, that the researches of Geology confirm the fact of a universal deluge, and thus afford a *sensible* proof of the credibility of the Sacred Historian, and, consequently, of the truth of the doctrines of Divine Revelation. But, besides the testimony which this science bears to the authenticity of Scripture History, it exhibits some of the grandest objects in the history of the physical operations of Divine Providence. It presents to our view, in a most impressive form, the majestic agency of God, in convulsing and disarranging the structure of our globe, and which at first sprung from his hand in perfect order and beauty. When we comtemplate the objects which this science embraces, we seem to be standing on the ruins of a former world. We behold "hills" which "have melted like wax at the presence of the Lord," and "mountains" which "have been carried into the midst of the sea." We behold rocks of enormous size, which have been rent from their foundations, and rolled from one continent to another—the most solid strata of the earth bent under the action of some tremendous power, and dispersed in fragments through the surrounding regions. We behold the summits of lofty mountains, over which the ocean had rolled its mighty billows —confounding lands and seas in one universal devastation—transporting plants and forests from one quarter of the world to another, and spreading universal destruction among the animated inhabitants of the water and the earth. When we enter the wild and romantic scene of a mountainous country or descend into the subterraneous regions of the globe, we are

every where struck with the vestiges of operations carried on by the powers of Nature, upon a scale of prodigious magnitude, and with the exertion of forces, the stupendous nature of which astonishes and overpowers the mind. Comtemplating such scenes of grandeur, we perceive the force and sublimity of those descriptions of Deity contained in the volume of inspiration: "The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; in his hand are the deep places of the earth, the strength of hills is his also. He removeth the mountains, and they know not; he overturneth them in his anger; he shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. At his presence the earth shook and trembled: the foundations also of the hills moved, and were shaken, because he was wrath." "Thou coveredst the earth with the deep, as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hastened away." While retracing such terrific displays of Omnipotence, we are naturally led to inquire into the *moral* cause which induced the Benevolent Creator to inflict upon the world such overwhelming desolations. For reason, as well as revelation, declares, that a *moral* cause must have existed. Man must have violated the commands of his Maker, and frustrated the end of his creation; and to this conclusion the Sacred Historian bears ample testimony.—"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually: and Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air."

ASTRONOMY.

Another science which stands in an intimate relation to religion, is Astronomy.

This sublime science teaches us the magnitudes and distances of the heavenly bodies, their arrangement, their various motions and phenomena, and the laws by which their movements are regulated. It presents to our view objects the most wonderful and sublime; whether we consider the *vast magnitude* of the bodies about which it is conversant—their immense *number*—the *velocity* of their motions—the *astonishing forces* requisite to impel them in their rapid career through the regions of the sky—the *vast spaces* which surround them, and in which they perform their revolutions—the *magnificent circles* they describe—the *splendor* of their appearance—or the *important ends* they are destined to serve in the grand system of the

universe. Having adverted to this subject, when illustrating the Omnipotence of the Deity, I shall here simply state a few additional facts with respect to the general appearance of the heavens, the bodies which compose the planetary system, and the discoveries which have been made in the region of the stars.

When we lift our eyes towards the sky, we perceive an apparent hollow hemisphere, placed at an indefinite distance, and surrounding the earth on every hand. In the day time, the principal object which appears in the hemisphere, is the sun. In the morning, we see him rise above the distant mountains, or from the extremity of the ocean; he gradually ascends the vault of heaven, and then declines, and disappears in the opposite quarter of the sky. In the northern parts of the globe where we reside, if, about the 21st of March, we place ourselves on an open plain, with our face towards the south, the sun will appear to rise on our left, or due east, about six in the morning, and about the same hour in the evening, he will set due west. In the month of June he rises to our left, but somewhat behind us, in a direction towards the north-east, ascends to a greater height at noon than in the month of March, and, after describing a large arc of the heavens, sets on our right, and still behind us, in the north-western quarter of the sky. In the month of December, if we stand in the same position, we may observe, without turning ourselves, both his rising and setting. He rises in the south-east, ascends to a small elevation at noon, and sets in the south-west, after having described a very small arc of the heavens. Every day he appears to move a little towards the *east*, or contrary to his apparent diurnal motion; for the stars which are seen to the eastward of him, appear every succeeding day to make a nearer approach to the place in which he is seen. All the variety of these successive changes is accomplished within the period of 365 days 6 hours, in which time he appears to have made a complete revolution round the heavens from *west* to *east*.

The moon is the next object in the heavens which naturally attracts our attention; and she is found to go through similar variations in the course of a month. When she first becomes visible at new moon, she appears in the western part of the heavens, in the form of a crescent, not far from the setting sun. Every night she increases in size, and removes to a greater distance from the sun, till, at last, she appears in the eastern part of the horizon, just as the sun disappears in the western; at which time she presents a round full-enlightened face. After this, she gradually moves farther and farther east

ward, and her enlightened part gradually decreases, till at last she seems to approach the sun as nearly in the east as she did in the west, and rises only a little before him in the morning, in the form of a crescent. All these different changes may be traced by attending to her apparent positions, from time to time, with respect to the fixed stars.

A dark shadow is occasionally seen to move across the face of the moon, which obscures her light, and gives her the appearance of tarnished copper. Sometimes this shadow covers only a small portion of her surface; at other times it covers the whole of her disk for an hour or two, and its margin always appears of the figure of a segment of a circle. This phenomenon, which happens, at an average, about twice every year, is termed an *eclipse* of the moon. It is produced by the shadow of the earth falling upon the moon, when the sun, the earth, and the moon, are nearly in a straight line; and can happen only at the time of *full moon.* Sometimes the moon appears to pass across the body of the sun, when her dark side is turned towards the earth, covering his disk either in whole or in part, and intercepting his rays from a certain portion of the earth. This is called an *eclipse of the sun*, and can happen only at the time of *new moon.* In a total eclipse of the sun, which seldom happens, the darkness is so striking, that the planets, and some of the larger stars, are distinctly seen, and the inferior animals appear struck with terror.

Again, if, on a winter's evening, about six o'clock, we direct our view to the eastern quarter of the sky, we shall perceive certain stars just risen above the horizon; if we view the same stars about midnight, we shall find them at a considerable elevation in the south, having apparently moved over a space equal to one half of the whole hemisphere. On the next morning, about six o'clock, the same stars will be seen setting in the western part of the sky. If we turn our eyes towards the north, we shall perceive a similar motion in these twinkling orbs, but with this difference, that a very considerable number of them neither rise nor set, but seem to move round an immoveable point, called the north pole. Near this point is placed the pole star, which seems to have little or no apparent motion, and which, in our latitude, appears elevated a little more than half way between the northern part of our horizon and the *zenith* or point above our heads. A person who has directed his attention to the heavens for the first time, after having made such observations, will naturally inquire—Whence come those stars which begin to appear in the east? Whither have those gone, which have disappeared in the west?

and, What becomes, during the day, of the stars which are seen in the night?—It will soon occur to a rational observer, who is convinced of the roundness of the earth, that the stars which rise above the eastern horizon come from another hemisphere, which we are apt to imagine below us, and when they set, return to that hemisphere again ; and, that the reason why the stars are not seen in the day-time, is, not because they are absent from our hemisphere, or have ceased to shine, but because their light is obscured by the more vivid splendor of the sun.* From such observations we are led to conclude, that the globe on which we tread is suspended in empty space —is surrounded on all sides by the celestial vault—and that the whole sphere of the heavens has an *apparent* motion round

* This is put beyond all doubt, by the invention of the telescope ; by which instrument, adapted to an equatorial motion, we are enabled to see many of the stars even at noon-day. The Author of this work, about eleven years ago, made a number of observations, by means of an *Equatorial telescope*, to determine the following particulars:—What stars and planets may be conveniently seen in the day-time, when the sun is above the horizon? What degrees of magnifying power are requisite for distinguishing them? How near their conjunction with the sun they may be seen;—and, whether the diminution of the aperture of the telescope, or the increase of magnifying power, conduces most to render a star or planet visible in day-light. The results of several hundreds of observations on these points, accompanied with some original deductions and remarks, are inserted in "Nicholson's Philosophical Journal," for October, 1813, vol. 36, p. 109—128. The following are some of the results which were deduced from the observations:—That a star of the *first* magnitude may be distinguished at any time of the day, with a magnifying power of 30 times, but that a higher magnifying power is preferable—That most of the stars of the second magnitude may be seen with a power of 100 ; and with a power of 60 times, when the sun is not much more than two hours above the horizon—That the planet Jupiter, when not within 30 or 40 degrees of the sun, may be seen with a power of 15 times;—and that Venus may, in most instances, be seen with a power of from 7 to 100 times, and upwards —That Jupiter can scarcely be distinguished in the day-time, when within 26 degrees of the sun ; but that Venus may be distinctly perceived near ner superior conjunction, when only 1 degree and 27 minutes from the sun's margin ; and, consequently, may be visible at the time of that conjunction, when her geocentric latitude equals or exceeds 1 degree 43 minutes—That she may be perceived, like a fine, slender crescent, within 35 hours after passing her *inferior* conjunction, &c. &c. One practical purpose to which such observations on Venus, at the time of her *superior* conjunction, may be applied, is, to determine the difference (if any) between her polar and equatorial diameters. For, it is only at that conjunction that she presents to the earth a full enlightened hemisphere ; and in no other position can the measure of both diameters be taken, except when she makes a *transit* across the sun's disk. As the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, are found to be spheriods, it is highly probable that Venus is of a similar figure ; but this point has never yet been ascertained by actual observation. See also "The Edinburgh Philos. Journal," No. 5, for July 1820, p. 191 ; and No. 13, for July, 1822—"The Scots Mag." for Feb. 1814, p. 84.—"Monthly Mag." Feb. 1814, and August 1820, p. 62.

the earth every twenty-four hours. Whether this motion be real, or only apparent, must be determined by other considerations.

Such general views of the nocturnal heavens, which every common observer may take, have a tendency to expand the mind, and to elevate it to the contemplation of an Invisible Power, by which such mighty movements are conducted. Whether we consider the vast concave, with all its radiant orbs, moving in majestic grandeur around our globe, or the earth itself whirling round its inhabitants in an opposite direction—an idea of sublimity, and of Almighty energy, irresistibly forces itself upon the mind, which throws completely into the shade the mightiest efforts of human power. The most powerful mechanical engines that were ever constructed by the agency of man, can scarcely afford us the least assistance in forming a conception of that incomprehensible Power, which, with unceasing energy, communicates motion to revolving worlds. And yet, such is the apathy with which the heavens are viewed by the greater part of mankind, that there are thousands who have occasionally gazed at the stars, for the space of fifty years, who are still ignorant of the fact, that they perform an *apparent* diurnal revolution round our globe.

Again, if we contemplate the heavens with some attention, for a number of successive nights, we shall find, that by far the greater part of the stars never vary their positions with respect to each other. If we observe two stars at a certain apparent distance from each other, either north or south, or in any other direction, they will appear at the same distance, and in the same relative position to each other, the next evening, the next month, and the next year. The stars, for instance, which form the *sword* and *belt* of *Orion*, present to our eye the same figure and relative aspect, during the whole period they are visible in winter, and from one year to another; and the same is the case with all the fixed stars in the firmament. On examining the sky a little more minutely, however, we perceive certain bodies which regularly shift their positions. Sometimes they appear to move towards the east, sometimes towards the west, and at other times seem to remain in a stationary position. These bodies have obtained the name of *planets*, or wandering stars; and, in our latitude, are most frequently seen, either in the eastern and western, or in the southern parts of the heavens. Ten of these planetary orbs have been discovered; six of which are, for the most part, invisible to the naked eye. By a careful examination of the motions of these bodies, and their different aspects, astrono-

mers have determined, that they all move round the sun as the centre of their motions, and form, along with the earth and several smaller globes, one grand and harmonious system. This assemblage of planetary bodies is generally termed the Solar System, of which I shall now endeavor to exhibit a brief outline.

THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

Of this system, the sun is the centre and the animating principle, and by far the largest body that exists within its limits. The first thing that strikes the mind when contemplating this glorious orb, is its astonishing magnitude. This vast globe is found to be about 880,000 miles in diameter, and, consequently, contains a mass of matter equal to *thirteen hundred thousand globes* of the size of the earth. Were its central parts placed adjacent to the surface of the earth, its circumference would reach two hundred thousand miles beyond the moon's orbit, on every side, filling a cubical space of 681,472,000,000,000,000 miles. If it would require 18,000 years to traverse every square mile on the earth's surface, at the rate of 30 miles a-day, (see p. 35,) it would require more than *two thousand millions of years* to pass over every part of the sun's surface, at the same rate. Even at the rate of 90 miles a-day it would require more than 80 years to go round its circumference. Of a body so vast in its dimensions, the human mind, with all its efforts, can form no adequate conception. It appears an extensive universe in itself; and, although no other body existed within the range of infinite space, this globe alone would afford a powerful demonstration of the Omnipotence of the Creator. Were the sun a hollow sphere, surrounded by an external shell, and a luminous atmosphere; were this shell perforated with several hundreds of openings into the internal part; were a globe as large as the earth placed at its centre, and another globe as large as the moon, and at the same distance from the centre as the moon is from us, to revolve round the central globe,—it would present to the view a universe as splendid and glorious as that which now appears to the vulgar eye,—a universe as large and extensive as the whole creation was conceived to be, by our ancestors, in the infancy of astronomy. And who can tell, but that Almighty Being, who has not left a drop of water in a stagnant pool without its inhabitants, has arranged a number of worlds within the capacious circuit of the sun, and peopled them with intelligent beings in the first stages of their existence, to remain there for a certain period, till they be prepared for being trans-

ported to a more expansive sphere of existence? It is easy to conceive, that enjoyments as exquisite, and a range of thoughts as ample as have ever yet been experienced by the majority of the inhabitants of our world, might be afforded to myriads of beings thus placed at the centre of this magnificent luminary. This supposition is, at least, as probable as that of the celebrated Dr. Herschel, who supposed that the *exterior* surface of the sun was peopled with inhabitants. For, if this were the case, the range of view of these inhabitants would be confined within the limits of two or three hundred miles, and no celestial body, but an immense blaze of light, would be visible in their hemisphere. Such is the variety which appears among the works of God, and such is the diversity of situations in which sensitive beings are placed, that we dare not pronounce it impossible that both these suppositions may be realized.

Though the sun seems to perform a daily circuit around our globe, he may be said, in this respect, to be fixed and immovable. This motion is not *real*, but only *apparent*, and is owing to the globe on which we are placed, moving round its axis from west to east; just as the objects on the bank of a river seem to move in a contrary direction, when we are sailing along its stream in a steam-boat. The only motion which is found to exist in the sun is, a motion of *rotation*, like that of a globe or ball twirled round a pivot or axis, which is performed in the space of 25 days and 10 hours. This motion has been ascertained by means of a variety of dark spots which are discov ered by the telescope on the sun's disk; which first appear on his eastern limb, and, after a period of about thirteen days, disappear on his western, and, after a similar period, re-appear on his eastern edge. These spots are various, both in number, in magnitude, and in shape: sometimes 40 or 50, and sometimes only one or two are visible, and at other times the sun appears entirely without spots. Most of them have a very dark nucleus, or central part, surrounded by an umbra, or fainter shade. Some of the spots are as large as would cover the whole continent of Europe, Asia, and Africa, others have been observed of the size of the whole surface of the earth; and one was seen, in the year 1779, which was computed to be more than *fifty thousand miles* in diameter.

With regard to the nature of this globe—it appears highly probable, from the observations of Dr. Herschel, that the sun is a solid and opaque body, surrounded with luminous clouds which float in the solar atmosphere, and that the dark nucleus of the spots is the opaque body of the sun appearing through occasional openings in this atmosphere. The height of the

atmosphere, he computes to be not less than 1843, nor more than 2765 miles, consisting of two regions; that nearest the sun being opaque, and probably resembling the clouds of our earth; the outermost emitting vast quantities of light, and forming the apparent luminous globe we behold.

The sun is the grand source of light and heat, both to the earth and to all the other planetary bodies. The heat he diffuses animates every part of our sublunary system, and all that variety of coloring which adorns the terrestrial landscape, is produced by his rays. It has been lately discovered, that the rays of light, and the rays of heat, or *caloric*, are distinct from each other; for, it can be demonstrated, that some rays from the sun produce heat, which have no power of communicating light or color. The greatest heat is found in the *red* rays, the least in the *violet* rays; and in a space beyond the red rays, where there is no light, the temperature is greatest. The rays of the sun have also been found to produce different chemical effects. The white muriate of silver is blackened in the violet ray, in the space of 15 seconds, though the red will not produce the same effect in less than 20 minutes. Phosphorus is kindled in the vicinity of the red ray, and extinguished in the vicinity of the violet. The solar light, therefore, consists of *three* different orders of rays, one producing *color*, a second producing *heat*, and a third *chemical* effects. Euler has computed that the light of the sun is equal to 6500 candles at a foot distance, while the moon would be as one candle at $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet; Venus at 421 feet; and Jupiter at 1320 feet.—That this immense luminary appears so small to our eyes, is owing to its vast distance, which is no less than ninety-five millions of miles. Some faint idea of this distance may be obtained, by considering, that a steam boat moving at the rate of 200 miles a-day, would require *thirteen hundred years* before it could traverse the space which intervenes between us and the sun.

"Hail sacred source of inexhausted light!
Prodigious instance of creating might!
His distance man's imagination foils;
Numbers will scarce avail to count the miles.
As swift as thought he darts his radiance round
To distant worlds, his system's utmost bound."—BROWN.

THE PLANET MERCURY.—Mercury is the nearest planet to the sun that has yet been discovered. He is about 37 millions of miles distant from the sun, and revolves around him in 88 days. His diameter is about 3200 miles. Before the discovery of the four new planets, Ceres, Pallas, Juno, and

Vesta, in the beginning of the present century, this globe was considered as the smallest primary planet in the system. His surface, however, contains above 32 millions of square miles, which is not much less than all the habitable parts of our globe. On account of his nearness to the sun, he is seldom seen by the naked eye; being always near that quarter of the heavens where the sun appears; and therefore, few discoveries have been made on his surface, by the telescope. M. Schroeter concludes, from certain observations, that this planet revolves round its axis in 24 hours and five minutes. The sun will appear to an inhabitant of Mercury seven times larger than to an inhabitant of the earth; and, if the degree of heat be in proportion to a planet's nearness to the sun, the heat in this planet will be seven times greater than on the surface of our globe; and, consequently, were the earth placed in the same position, all the water on its surface would boil, and soon be turned into vapor. But the All-wise Creator has, doubtless, attempered the surface of this globe, and the constitution of the beings that may occupy it, to the situation in which they are placed.*

Venus, the next planet in order from the sun, revolves around him in 224 days, at the distance of 68 millions of miles, and its diameter is about seven thousand seven hundred miles, or nearly the size of the earth; and it turns round its axis in the space of 23 hours and 20 minutes. This planet is the most brilliant orb which appears in our nocturnal heavens, and is usually distinguished by the name of the morning and evening star. When it approaches nearest to the earth, it is about

* From a variety of facts which have been observed in relation to the production of *caloric*, it does not appear probable, that the degree of heat on the surfaces of the different planets is inversely proportional to the squares of their respective distances from the sun. It is more probable, that it depends chiefly on the distribution of the *substance of caloric* on the surfaces, and throughout the atmospheres of these bodies—in different quantities, according to the different situations they occupy in the solar system; and that these different quantities of caloric are put into action by the influence of the solar rays, so as to produce that degree of *sensible* heat requisite for each respective planetary globe. On this hypothesis—which is corroborated by a great variety of facts and experiments—there may be no more sensible heat felt on the surface of the planet Mercury, than on the surface of Herschel, although one of these bodies is nearly 50 times nearer the sun than the other. We have only to suppose that a small quantity of caloric exists in Mercury, and a larger quantity in Herschel, proportionate to his distance from the centre of the system. On this ground, we have no reason to believe, either that the planets nearest the sun are parched with excessive heat, or that those that are most distant are exposed to all the rigors of insufferable cold, or that the different degrees of temperature which may be found in these bodies, render them unfit for being the abodes of sensitive and intellectual beings.

27 millions of miles distant; and, at its greatest distance, it is no less than 163 millions of miles from the earth. Were the whole of its enlightened surface turned towards the earth, when it is nearest, it would exhibit a light and brilliancy, twenty-five times greater than it generally does, and appear like a small brilliant moon; but, at that time, its dark hemisphere is turned towards our globe. Both Venus and Mercury, when viewed by a telescope, appear to pass successively through all the shapes and appearances of the moon; sometimes assuming a gibbous phase, and at other times, the form of a half-moon, or that of a crescent; which proves, that they are dark bodies in themselves, and derive their light from the sun. The most distinct and beautiful views of Venus especially when she appears as a crescent, are to be obtained *in the day time*, by means of an equatorial telescope.—From a variety of observations which the author has made with this instrument, it has been found that Venus may be seen every clear day without interruption, during a period of 583 days, with the occasional exception of 13 days, in one case, and only 3 days in another—a circumstance which cannot be affirmed of any other celestial body, the sun only excepted.* M. Schroeter affirms, that he has discovered mountains on the surface of this globe, one of which is 10, another 11, and a third 22 miles high. It appears also to be encompassed with

* See Edin. Phil. Journ. No. V. July, 1820, and No. XIII. July, 1822. —I have found, from observation, that this planet may be seen in the day time, when only 1° 43′ from the sun's centre; and, consequently, when its geocentric latitude at the time of the superior conjunction exceeds that quantity, it may be distinctly seen during the whole period of 583 days, excepting about 35 hours before and after its *inferior* conjunction.—It is well known to astronomers, that there has been a difference of opinion with respect to the *period* of the rotation of this planet. Cassini, from observations on a bright spot which advanced 20 degrees, in 24 hours, 34 minutes, determined the time of its rotation to be 23 hours and 20 minutes. On the other hand, Bianchini, from similar observations, concluded, that its diurnal period was 24 days and 8 hours. The difficulty of deciding between these two opinions, arises from the short time in which observations can be made on this planet, either before sun-rise, or after sun-set, which prevents us from tracing, with accuracy, the progressive motion of its spots for a sufficient length of time. And, although an observer should mark the position of the spots, at the same hour, on two succeeding evenings, and find they had moved forward about 20 degrees in 24 hours, he would still be at a loss to determine, whether they had moved 20 degrees *in all*, since the preceding observation, or had finished a revolution, and 20 degrees more.—In "Nicholson's Philosophical Journal," vol. 36, I endeavoured to show how this point may be determined by observations made on Venus in the day time, by which, in certain cases, the progressive motion of her spots might be traced, without interruption, for 12 hours or more, which would completely settle the period of rotation.

an atmosphere, the densest part of which is about 16,000 feet high. About twice in the course of a century, this planet appears to pass, like a dark spot, across the sun's disk. This is termed the *transit* of Venus. The last transit happened June 3, 1769; the next will happen on December 8, 1874, which will be invisible in Europe. Another will happen on the 6th December, 1882, which will be partly visible in Great Britain.

The EARTH is the next planet in the system. It moves round the sun in 365 days, 5 hours, and 49 minutes, at the distance of 95 millions of miles, and round its axis in 23 hours, 56 minutes, 4 seconds. The former is called its *annual*, and the latter, its *diurnal* motion. That the earth is, in reality, a moving body, is a fact which can no longer be called in question; it is indeed susceptible of the clearest demonstration. But my limits will not permit to enter into a detail of the arguments by which it is supported. I have already adverted to one consideration, from which its diurnal rotation may be inferred. (See pp. 47, 48.) Either the earth moves round its axis every day, or *the whole universe* moves round it in the same time. To suppose the latter case to be the fact, would involve a reflection on the wisdom of its Almighty Author, and would form the only exception that we know, to that beautiful proportion, harmony, and simplicity, which appear in all the works of Nature. Were it possible to construct a machine as large as the city of London, and to apply to it mechanical powers sufficient to make it revolve on an axis, so as to carry round a furnace for the purpose of roasting a joint of mutton, suspended in the centre of its motion—while we might admire the ingenuity and the energies displayed in its construction—all mankind would unite in condemning it as a display of consummate folly. But such an extravagant piece of machinery would not be half so preposterous as to suppose, that the vast universe is daily revolving around our little globe, and that all the planetary motions have an immediate respect to it. And shall we dare to ascribe to Him who is "the only wise God," contrivances which we would pronounce to be the perfection of folly in mankind? It is recorded of the Astronomer Alphonsus, King of Castile, who lived in the 13th century, that, after having studied the Ptolemaic System, which supposes the earth at rest in the centre of the universe, he uttered the following *impious* sentence: "If I had been of God's privy council, when he made the world, I would have advised him better." So that false conceptions of the System of Nature, lead to erroneous notions of that adorable Being who is pos-

sessed of infinite Perfection. We find that bodies much larger than the earth have a similar rotation. The planet Jupiter, a globe 295,000 miles in circumference, moves round his axis in less than ten hours; and all the other planetary bodies, on which spots have been discovered, are found to have a diurnal motion. Besides, it is found to be a universal law of nature, that smaller globes revolve round larger; but there is no example in the universe, of a larger body revolving around a smaller. The moon revolves around the earth, but she is much smaller than the earth; the moons which move around Jupiter, Saturn, and Herschel, are all less than their primaries, and the planets which perform their revolutions around the sun are much less than that central luminary.

With regard to the *annual* revolution of the earth, if such a motion did not exist, the planetary system would present a scene of inextricable confusion. The planets would sometimes move backwards, sometimes forwards, and, at other times, remain stationary; and would describe looped curves, so anomalous and confused, that no man in his senses could view the All-wise Creator as the author of so much confusion. But, by considering the earth as revolving in an orbit between Venus and Mars, (which all celestial observations completely demonstrate,) all the apparent irregularities of the planetary motions are completely solved and accounted for; and the Solar System presents a scene of beauty, harmony and grandeur, combined with a simplicity of design which characterizes all the works of Omnipotence.

The Moon.—Next to the sun, the moon is to us the most interesting of all the celestial orbs. She is the constant attendant of the earth, and revolves around it, in 27 days, 8 hours; but the period from one new or full moon to another, is about 29 days, 12 hours. She is the nearest of all the heavenly bodies; being only about two hundred and forty thousand miles distant from the earth. She is much smaller than the earth; being only 2,180 miles in diameter. Her surface, when viewed with a telescope, presents an interesting and a variegated aspect; being diversified with mountains, valleys, rocks, and plains, in every variety of form and position. Some of these mountains form long and elevated ridges, resembling the chains of the Alps and the Andes; while others, of a conical form, rise to a great height, from the middle of level plains, somewhat resembling the Peak of Teneriffe. But the most singular feature of the moon, is, those circular ridges and cavities which diversify every portion of her surface. A range of mountains of a circular form, rising

three or four miles above the level of the adjacent districts, surrounds, like a mighty rampart, an extensive plain; and, in the middle of this plain or cavity, an insulated conical hill rises to a considerable elevation. Several hundreds of these circular plains, most of which are considerably below the level of the surrounding country, may be perceived, with a good telescope, on every region of the lunar surface. They are of all dimensions, from two or three miles to forty miles in diameter; and, if they be adorned with verdure, they must present to the view of a spectator, placed among them, a more variegated, romantic, and sublime scenery than is to be found on the surface of our globe. An idea of some of these scenes may be acquired by conceiving a plain of about a hundred miles in circumference, encircled with a range of mountains, of various forms, three miles in perpendicular height, and having a mountain near the centre, whose top reaches a mile and a half above the level of the plain. From the top of this central mountain, the whole plain, with all its variety of objects, would be distinctly visible; and the view would appear to be bounded on all sides by a lofty amphitheatre of mountains, in every diversity of shape, rearing their summits to the sky. From the summit of the circular ridge, the conical hill in the centre, the opposite circular range, the plain below, and some of the adjacent plains, which encompass the *exterior* ridge of the mountains, would form another variety of view;—and a third variety would be obtained from the various aspects of the central mountain, and the surrounding scenery, as viewed from the plains below.

The Lunar mountains are of all sizes, from a furlong to five miles in perpendicular elevation. Certain luminous spots, which have been occasionally seen on the dark side of the moon, seem to demonstrate that fire exists in this planet. Dr. Herschel, and several other astronomers suppose, that they are volcanoes in a state of eruption. It would be a more pleasing idea, and perhaps as nearly corresponding to fact, to suppose, that these phenomena are owing to some occasional splendid illuminations, produced by the Lunar inhabitants, during their long nights. Such a scene as the burning of Moscow, the conflagration of an extensive forest, or the splendid illumination of a large city with gas-lights, might present similar appearances to a spectator in the moon.—The bright spots of the moon are the mountainous regions: the dark spots are the plains, or more level parts of her surface. There may probably be rivers or small lakes on this planet; but there are no seas or large collections of water. It appears highly

probable, from the observations of Schroeter, that the moon is encompassed with an atmosphere; but no clouds, rain, nor snow seem to exist in it. The illuminating power of the light derived from the moon, according to the experiments made by Professor Leslie, is about the *one hundred and fifty thousandth part* of the illuminating power of the sun. According to the experiments of M. Boguer, it is only as 1 to 300,000.

The Moon always presents the same face to us; which proves, that she revolves round her axis in the same time that she revolves round the earth. As this orb derives its light from the sun, and reflects a portion of it upon the earth, so the earth performs the same office to the moon. A spectator on the lunar surface would behold the earth, like a luminous orb, suspended in the vault of heaven, presenting a surface about 13 times larger than the moon does to us, and appearing sometimes gibbous, sometimes horned, and at other times with a round full face. The light which the earth reflects upon the dark side of the moon may be distinctly perceived by a common telescope, from three, to six or eight days after the change.—The lunar surface contains about 15 millions of square miles, and is, therefore, capable of containing a population equal to that of our globe, allowing only about 53 inhabitants to every square mile. That this planet is inhabited by sensitive and intelligent beings, there is every reason to conclude, from a consideration of the sublime scenery with which its surface is adorned, and of the general beneficence of the Creator, who appears to have left no large portion of his material creation without animated existences; and it is highly probable, that *direct proofs* of the moon's being inhabited may hereafter be obtained, when all the varieties on her surface shall have been more minutely explored.*

The Planet Mars.—Next to the earth a[illegible] moon, the planet Mars performs his revolution round the sun, in one year and ten months, to the distance of 145 millions of miles. His diameter is about 4,200 miles, and he is distinguished from all the other planets, by his *ruddy* appearance, which is owing to a *dense atmosphere* with which he is environed. With a good telescope, his surface appears diversified by a variety of spots; by the motion of which it is found, that he turns round his axis in 24 hours and 40 minutes. The inclination of his axis to the plane of his orbit being about 28° 42′, the days and nights, and the different seasons in this planet, will bear a considerable resemblance to those we experience in our

* See Appendix, No. III

terrestrial sphere.* At his nearest approach to the earth, his distance from us is about 50 millions of miles; and, at his greatest distance, he is about 240 millions of miles; so that in the former case he appears nearly 25 times larger than in the latter. To a spectator in this planet, our earth will appear, alternately, as a morning and evening star, and will exhibit all the phases of the moon, just as Venus does to us, but with a less degree of apparent magnitude and splendor. A luminous zone has been observed about the poles of Mars, which is subject to successive changes. Dr. Herschel supposes that it is produced by the reflection of the sun's light from his frozen regions, and that the melting of these masses of polar ice is the cause of the variation in its magnitude and appearance. This planet moves, in its orbit, at the rate of fifty-five thousand miles an hour.

The new Planets.—Between the orbs of Mars and Jupiter, four planetary bodies have been lately discovered, accompanied with circumstances somewhat different from those of the other bodies which compose our system. They are named *Ceres*, *Pallas*, *Juno*, and *Vesta*. The planet *Ceres* was discovered at Palermo, in Sicily, by M. Piazzi, on the first day of the present century. It is of a ruddy color, and appears about the size of a star of the 8th magnitude, and is consequently invisible to the naked eye. It performs its revolution in 4 years and 7 months, at the distance of 260 millions of miles from the sun, and is reckoned, by some astronomers, to be about 1624 miles in diameter, or about half the diameter of Mercury. It appears to be surrounded with a large dense atmosphere.—*Pallas* was discovered the following year, namely, on the 28th of March, 1802, by Dr. Olbers of Bremen. It is supposed to be about 2000 miles in diameter, or nearly the size of the moon. It revolves about the sun in 4 years and 7 months, or nearly in the same time as Ceres, at the distance of 266 millions of miles; and is surrounded with a nebulosity or atmosphere, above 400 miles in height, similar to that of Ceres. The planet *Juno* was discovered on the 1st September, 1804, by Mr. Harding of Bremen. Its mean distance from the sun is about 253 millions of miles; its revolution is completed in 4 years and 130 days, and its diameter is computed to be about 1425 miles. It is free from the nebu-

* The inclination of the earth's axis to the ecliptic, or, in other words, to the plane of its annual orbit, is 23 degrees and 28 minutes, which is the cause of the diversity of seasons, and of the different length of days and nights. Were the axis of the earth perpendicular to its orbit, as is the case with the planet Jupiter, there would be no diversity of seasons.

losity which surrounds Pallas, and is distinguished from all the other planets by the great eccentricity of its orbit; being, at its least distance from the sun, only 189 millions of miles, and at its greatest distance 316 millions.—*Vesta* was discovered by Dr. Olbers on the 29th March, 1807. It appears like a star of the 5th or 6th magnitude, and may sometimes be distinguished by the naked eye. Its light is more intense and white than any of the other three, and it is not surrounded with any nebulosity. It is distant from the sun about 225 millions of miles, and completes its revolution in 3 years and 240 days. Its diameter has not yet been accurately ascertained; but from the intensity of its light, and other circumstances, it is concluded, that it exceeds in magnitude both Pallas and Juno.

These planetary globes present to our view a variety of anomalies and singularities, which appear incompatible with the regularity, proportion, and harmony which were formerly supposed to characterize the arrangements of the solar system.—They are bodies *much smaller* in size than the other planets—they revolve *nearly at the same distances* from the sun, and perform their revolutions in *nearly the same periods*—their orbits are *much more eccentric*, and have a *much greater degree of inclination* to the ecliptic, than those of the old planets—and, what is altogether singular, (except in case of comets,) *their orbits cross each other;* so that there is a *possibility* that two of these bodies might happen to interfere, and to strike each other, in the course of their revolutions. The orbit of Ceres crosses the orbit of Pallas. Vesta may sometimes be at a greater distance from the sun than either Ceres, Pallas or Juno, although its mean distance is less than that of either of them, by several millions of miles; so that the orbit of Vesta crosses the orbits of all the other three. From these and other circumstances, it has, with a high degree of probability, been concluded—that these four planets are the fragments of a large celestial body which once revolved between Mars and Jupiter, and which had been burst asunder by some immense irruptive force. This idea seems to have occurred to Dr. Olbers after he had discovered the planet Pallas, and he imagined that other fragments might possibly exist. He concluded, that, if they all diverged from the same point, "they ought to have two common points of reunion, or two nodes in opposite regions of the heavens, through which all the planetary fragments must sooner or later pass." One of these nodes he found to be in the constellation Virgo, and the other in the Whale; and it is a remarkable coincidence, that it was in the latter of these regions that the planet Juno was discov-

ered by Mr. Harding. In order to detect the remaining fragments (if any existed) Dr. Olbers examined, three times every year, all the small stars in Virgo and the Whale; and it was actually in the constellation Virgo, that he discovered the planet Vesta. It is not unlikely that other fragments of a similar description may be discovered. Dr. Brewster attributes the fall of meteoric stones* to the smaller fragments of these bodies happening to come within the sphere of the earth's attraction. His ingenious reasonings on this subject, and in support of Dr. Olbers' hypothesis above stated, may be seen in *Edin. Ency.* vol. ii. p. 641, and in his "Supplementary chapters to Ferguson's Astronomy."

The fact to which I have now adverted seem to unfold a new scene in the history of the dispensations of the Almighty, and to warrant the conclusion, that the earth is not the only globe in the universe which is subject to physical changes and moral revolutions.

THE PLANET JUPITER.—This planet is 490 millions of miles distant from the sun, and performs its annual revolution in nearly twelve of our years, moving at the rate of twenty-nine thousand miles an hour. It is the largest planet in the solar system; being 89,000 miles in diameter, or about *fourteen hundred times* larger than the earth. Its motion round its axis is performed in nine hours and fifty-six minutes; and, therefore, the portions of its surface about the equator, move at the rate 28,000 miles an hour, which is nearly twenty-seven times swifter than the earth's diurnal rotation. The figure of Jupiter is that of an oblate spheroid, the axis, or diameter passing through the poles, being about 6000 miles shorter than that passing through the equator. The Earth, Saturn,

* Meteoric stones, or, what are generally termed *aerolites*, are stones which sometimes fall from the upper regions of the atmosphere, upon the earth. The substance of which they are composed is, for the most part, *metallic;* but the ore of which they consist is not to be found *in the same constituent proportions* in any terrestrial substances. Their fall is generally preceded by a luminous appearance, a hissing noise, and a loud explosion; and, when found immediately after their descent, are always hot. Their size differs from small fragments, of inconsiderable weight, to the most ponderous masses. Some of the largest portions of these stones have been found to weigh from 300 lbs. to several tons; and they have often descended to the earth with a force sufficient to bury them many feet under the soil. Some have supposed that these bodies are projected from volcanoes in the moon; others, that they proceed from volcanoes on the earth; while others imagine that they are generated in the regions of the atmosphere; but the true cause is, probably, not yet ascertained. In some instances, these stones have penetrated through the roofs of houses, and proved destructive to the inhabitants.

and Mars, are also spheroids; and it is highly probably that Mercury, Venus, and Herschel are of a similar figure, though the fact has not yet been ascertained by actual observation.—When viewed with a telescope, several spots have been occasionally discovered on the surface of this planet, by the motion of which, its rotation was determined.

But what chiefly distinguishes the surface of Jupiter is several streaky appearances, or dusky strips, which extend across his disk, in lines parallel to his equator. These are generally termed his *Belts*. Three of these belts, or zones, nearly equi-distant from each other, are most frequently observed; but they are not regular or constant in their appearance.* Sometimes only one is to be seen, sometimes five, and sometimes seven or eight have been distinctly visible; and, in the latter case, two of them have been known to disappear during the time of observation. On the 28th May, 1780, Dr. Herschel perceived "the *whole surface of Jupiter* covered with small curved belts, or rather lines, that were not continuous across his disk." Though these belts are generally parallel to each other, yet they are not always so. Their breadth is likewise variable; one belt having been observed to grow narrow, while another in its neighborhood has increased in breadth, as if the one had flowed into the other. The time of their continuance is also uncertain; sometimes they remain unchanged for several months, at other times, new belts have been formed in an hour or two. What these belts or variable appearances are it is difficult to determine. Some have regarded them as strata of clouds floating in the atmosphere of Jupiter; while others imagine, that they are the marks of great physical revolutions which are perpetually changing the surface of that planet. The former opinion appears the most probable. But, whatever be the nature of these belts, the sudden changes to which they are occasionally subject, seem to indicate the rapid operation of some powerful physical agency; for some of them are more than five thousand miles in breadth; and since they have been known to disappear in the space of an hour or two, and even during the time of a casual observation—agents more powerful than any with which we are acquainted must have produced so extensive an effect.

Jupiter is attended by four satellites or moons, which present

* A representation of these belts, in the positions in which they most frequently appear, is exhibited in the engraving, Fig. 2. Fig. 1. represents the double ring of Saturn, as it appears when viewed through a powerful telescope—Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, represent Saturn, Jupiter, Herschel, the Earth and Moon, *in their relative sizes and proportions.*

a very beautiful appearance when viewed through a telescope. The first moon, or that nearest the planet, it 230,000 miles distant from its centre, and goes round it in 42½ hours; and will appear from its surface, four times larger than our moon does to us. The second moon, being farther distant, will appear about the size of ours; the third, somewhat less; and the fourth, which is a million of miles distant from Jupiter, and takes sixteen days to go round him, will appear only about one third the diameter of our moon. These moons suffer frequent eclipses from passing through Jupiter's shadow, in the same way as our moon is eclipsed by passing through the shadow of the earth. By the eclipses of these moons, the motion of light was ascertained; and they are found to be of essential use in determining the longitude of places on the surface of our globe. This planet, if seen from its nearest moon, will present a surface a thousand times as large as our moon does to us, and will appear in the form of a crescent, a half-moon, a gibbous phase, and a full-moon, in regular succession, every 42 hours. Jupiter's axis being nearly perpendicular to his orbit, he has no sensible change of seasons, such as we experience on the earth. Were we placed on the surface of this planet, with the limited powers of vision we now possess, our earth and moon would entirely disappear, as if they were blotted out from the map of creation; and the inhabitants of these regions must have much better eyes than ours, if they know that there is such a globe as the earth in the universe.

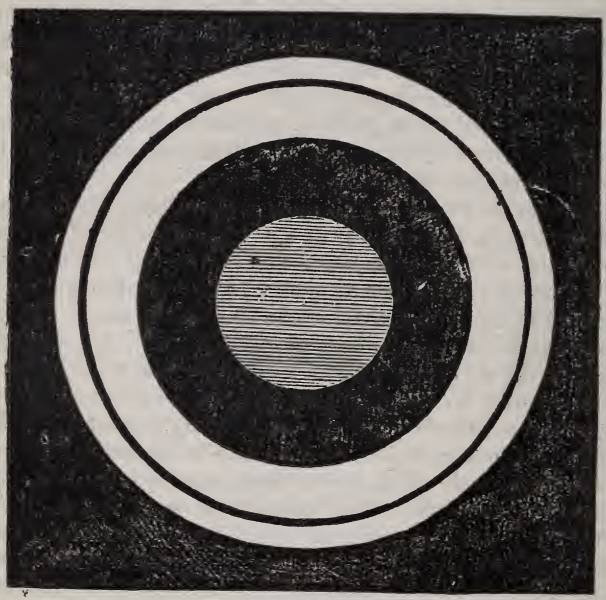
The planet Saturn.—This planet is 900 millions of miles distant from the sun, being nearly double the distance of Jupiter. Its diameter is 79,000 miles, and, consequently, it is more than *nine hundred times* the bulk of the earth. It takes 29½ years to complete its revolution about the sun; but its diurnal motion is completed in ten hours and sixteen minutes; so that the year in this planet is nearly thirty times the length of ours, while the day is shorter, by more than one half. The year, therefore, contains about twenty-five thousand one hundred and fifty *days*, or periods of its diurnal rotation, which is equal to 10,759 of our days. Saturn is of a spheroidal figure, or somewhat of the shape of an orange; his equatorial being more than six thousand miles longer than his polar diameter. His surface, like that of Jupiter, is diversified with belts and dark spots. Dr. Herschel, at certain times, perceived five belts on his surface, three of which were dark, and two bright. The dark belts had a yellowish tinge, and generally covered a larger zone of the disk of Saturn, than the belts of Jupiter occupy upon his surface. On account of the

great distance of this planet from the sun, the light it receives from that luminary is only the *ninetieth part* of what we enjoy; but, by calculation, it is found, that this quantity is a thousand times greater than the light which the full moon affords to us. Besides, it is surrounded by no fewer than seven moons, which supply it with light in the absence of the sun. Five of these moons were discovered during the seventeenth century, by Huygens and Cassini; and the sixth and seventh were discovered by Dr. Herschel, in 1789, soon after his large forty feet reflecting telescope was constructed. These moons, and also those which accompany Jupiter, are estimated to be not less than the earth in magnitude, and are found, like our moon, to revolve round their axis in the same time in which they revolve about their respective primaries.

Rings of Saturn.—The most extraordinary circumstance connected with this planet, is, the phenomenon of a *double ring*, which surrounds its body, but nowhere touches it, being thirty thousand miles distant from any part of the planet, and is carried along with the planet in its circuit round the sun. This is the most singular and astonishing object in the whole range of the planetary system; no other planet being found environed with so wonderful an appendage; and the planets which may belong to other systems, being placed beyond the reach of our observations, no idea can be formed of the peculiar apparatus with which any of them may be furnished. This double ring consists of two concentric rings, detached from each other; the innermost of which is nearly three times as broad as the outermost. The outside diameter of the *exterior* ring is 204,000 miles; and, consequently, its circumference will measure *six hundred and forty thousand miles*, or eighty times the diameter of our globe. Its breadth is 7,200 miles, or nearly the diameter of the earth. Were four hundred and fifty globes, of the size of the earth, placed close to one another, on a plane, this immense ring would enclose the whole of them, together with all the interstices, or open spaces between the different globes. The outside diameter of the *innermost* ring is 184,000 miles, and its breadth twenty thousand miles, or about 2½ times broader than the diameter of the earth. The dark space, or interval between the two rings, is 2,800 miles. The breadth of both the rings, including the dark space between them, is thirty thousand miles, which is equal to the distance of the innermost ring from the body of Saturn.

The following figure represents a view of Saturn and his rings, as they would appear, were our eye perpendicular to

one of the planes of those rings; but our eye is never so much elevated above either plane, as to have the visual ray standing at right angles to it: it is never elevated more than 30 degrees above the planes of the rings. When we view Saturn through a telescope, we always see the ring at an oblique angle, so that it appears of an *oval* form, the outward



circular rim being projected into an ellipsis more or less oblong, according to the different degrees of obliquity with which it is viewed, as will be seen in the figure of Saturn in the copperplate engraving.

These rings cast a deep shadow upon the planet, which proves that they are not shining *fluids*, but composed of *solid* matter. They appear to be possessed of a higher reflective power than the surface of Saturn; as the light reflected by them is more brilliant than that of the planet. One obvious use of this double ring is, to reflect light upon the planet, in the absence of the sun: what other purposes it may be intended to subserve, in the system of Saturn, is, at present, to us unknown. The sun illuminates one side of it during fifteen years, or one-half of the period of the planet's revolution; and, during the next fifteen years, the other side is enlightened in its turn. Twice in the course of thirty years, there is a short

period, during which neither side is enlightened, and when, of course, it ceases to be visible ;—namely, at the time when the sun ceases to shine on one side, and is about to shine on the other. It revolves round its axis, and, consequently, around Saturn, in ten hours and a half, which is at the rate of a thousand miles in a minute, or fifty-eight times swifter than the earth's equator. When viewed from the middle zone of the planet, in the absence of the sun, the rings will appear like vast luminous arches, extending along the canopy of heaven, from the eastern to the western horizon ; having an apparent breadth equal to a hundred times the apparent diameter of our moon, and will be seen darkened about the middle, by the shadow of Saturn.*

There is no other planet in the solar system, whose firmament will present such a variety of splendid and magnificent objects, as that of Saturn. The various aspects of his seven moons, one rising above the horizon, while another is setting, and a third approaching to the meridian ; one entering into an eclipse, and another emerging from it ; one appearing as a crescent, and another with a gibbous phase ; and sometimes the whole of them shining in the same hemisphere, in one bright assemblage ;—the majestic motions of the rings,—at one time illuminating the sky with their splendour, and eclipsing the stars ; at another, casting a deep shade over certain regions of the planet, and unveiling to view the wonders of the starry firmament—are scenes worthy of the majesty of the Divine Being to unfold, and of rational creatures to contemplate. Such magnificent displays of Wisdom and Omnipotence, lead us to conclude that the numerous splendid objects connected with this planet, were not created merely to shed their lustre on naked rocks and barren sands ; but that an immense population of intelligent beings is placed in those regions, to enjoy the bounty, and to adore the perfections of their great Creator.—The double ring of Saturn, when viewed through a good telescope, generally appears like a luminous handle on each side of the planet, with a dark interval between the interior edge of the ring, and the convex body of Saturn ; which is owing to its oblique position with respect to our line of vision. When its outer edge is turned directly towards the

* See the Engraving, fig. 7, which represents a view of the appearance which the rings and moons of Saturn will exhibit, in certain cases, about midnight, when beheld from a point 20 or 30 degrees north from his equator. The shade on the upper part of the rings represents the shadow of the body Saturn. The shadow will appear to move gradually to the west as the morning approaches.

earth, it becomes invisible, or appears like a dark stripe across the disk of the planet. This phenomenon happens once every fifteen years.

The Planet Herschel.—This planet, which is also known by the names of *the Georgium Sidus*, and *Uranus*, was discovered by Dr. Herschel on the 13th March, 1781. It is the most distant planet from the sun, that has yet been discovered; being removed at no less than 1800 millions of miles from that luminary, which is nineteen times farther than the earth is from the sun—a distance so great, that a cannon ball, flying at the rate of 480 miles an hour, would not reach it in 400 years. Its diameter is about 35,000 miles; and, of course, it is about eighty times larger than the earth. It appears like a star of the sixth magnitude; but can seldom be distinguished by the naked eye. It takes about 83 years and a half to complete its revolution round the sun; and, though it is the slowest moving body in the system, it moves at the rate of 15,000 miles an hour. As the degree of sensible heat in any planet does not appear to depend altogether on its nearness to the sun, the temperature of this planet may be as mild as that which obtains in the most genial climate of our globe.* The diameter of the sun, as seen from Herschel, is little more than the apparent diameter of Venus, as seen by the naked eye; and the light which it receives from that luminary, is 360 times less than what we experience; yet this proportion is found by calculation to be equal to the effect which would be produced by 248 of our full moons; and, in the absence of the sun, there are *six moons* which reflect light upon this distant planet, all of which were discovered likewise by Dr. Herschel. Small as the proportion of light is, which this planet receives from the sun, it is easy to conceive, that beings similar to man, placed on the surface of this globe, with a slight modification of their organs of vision, might be made to perceive objects with a clearness and distinctness even superior to what we can do. We have only to suppose, that the Creator has formed their eyes with *pupils* capable of a much larger expansion than ours; and has endued their *retina* with a much greater degree of nervous sensibility. At all events, we may rest assured, that He who has placed sentient beings in any region, has, by laws with which we are partly unacquainted, adapted the constitution of the inhabitant to the nature of the habitation.

* See Note, page 176.

"Strange and amazing must the difference be,
'Twixt this dull planet and *bright Mercury;*
Yet reason says, nor can we doubt at all,
Millions of beings dwell on either ball,
With constitutions fitted for that spot
Where Providence, all-wise, has fixed their lot."

BAKER'S UNIVERSE.

The celestial globes which I have now described, are all the planets which are at present known to belong to the solar system. It is probable that other planetary bodies may yet be discovered between the orbits of Saturn and Herschel, and even far beyond the orbit of the latter; and it is also not improbable that planets may exist in the immense interval of 37 millions of miles between Mercury and the Sun.* These (if any exist) can be detected only by a series of *day observations*, made with equatorial telescopes; as they could not be supposed to be seen, after sun-set, on account of their proximity to the sun. Five *primary*† planets, and eight *secondaries*, have been discovered within the last 42 years; and, therefore, we have no reason to conclude, that all the bodies belonging to our system have yet been detected, till every region of the heavens be more fully explored.

COMETS.—Besides the planetary globes to which I have now adverted, there is a class of celestial bodies which occasionally appear in the heavens, to which the name of *Comets* has been given. They are distinguished from the other celestial bodies, by their ruddy appearance, and by a long train of light, called the *tail*, which sometimes extends over a considerable portion of the heavens, and which is so transparent, that the stars may be seen through it. The tail is always directed to that part of the heavens which is opposite to the sun, and increases in size as it approaches him, and is again gradually diminished, as the comet flies off to the more distant regions of space. Their apparent magnitude is very different:

* The Author, some years ago, described a method by which the planets (if any) within the orbit of Mercury, may be discovered in the daytime, by means of a simple contrivance for intercepting the solar rays, and by the frequent application, by a number of observers, of powerful telescopes, to a certain portion of the sky, in the vicinity of the sun. The details of this plan have not yet been published; but the reader will see them alluded to in No. V. of the Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, for July, 1820, p. 191.

† A primary planet is that which revolves round the sun as a centre; as Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. A *secondary* planet is one which revolves round a primary planet as its centre; as the Moon, and the satellites of Jupiter and Saturn. The primary planets are distinguished from the fixed stars, by the steadiness of their light; not having a *twinkling* appearance, as the stars exhibit.

sometimes they appear only of the bigness of the fixed stars; at other times they equal the diameter of Venus; and sometimes they have appeared nearly as large as the Moon. They traverse the heavens in all directions, and cross the orbits of the planets. When examined through a telescope they appear to consist of a dark central nucleus, surrounded by a dense atmosphere, or mass of vapors. They have been ascertained to move in long narrow *ellipses* or *ovals*, around the sun; some of them, on their nearest approach to him, having been within a million of miles of his centre; and then fly off to a region several thousands of millions of miles distant. When near the sun, they move with amazing velocity. The velocity of the comet which appeared in 1680, according to Sir Isaac Newton's calculation, was eight hundred and eighty thousand miles an hour. They appear to be bodies of no great density, and their size seldom exceeds that of the moon. The length of the tails of some comets has been estimated at fifty millions of miles. According to Dr. Herschel's computations, the solid nucleus, or central part of the comet which appeared in 1811, was only 428 miles in diameter; but the real diameter of the head, or nebulous portion of the comet, he computed to be about 127 thousand miles. The length of its tail he computed to be above one hundred millions of miles, and its breadth nearly fifteen millions. It was nearest to the earth on the 11th October, when its distance was 113 millions of miles. The number of comets which have occasionally been seen within the limits of our system, since the commencement of the Christian era, is about 500, of which the paths or orbits of 98 have been calculated.

As these bodies cross the paths of the planets in every direction, there is a possibility, that some of them might strike against the earth in their approach to the sun; and, were this to happen, the consequences would be awful beyond description. But we may rest assured that that Almighty Being who at first launched them into existence, directs all their motions, however complicated; and that the earth shall remain secure against all such concussions from celestial agents, till the purposes of his moral government in this world shall be fully accomplished. What regions these bodies visit, when they pass beyond the limits of our view; upon what errands they are sent, when they again revisit the central parts of our system; what is the difference in their physical constitution, from that of the sun and planets; and what important ends they are destined to accomplish, in the economy of the universe, are inquiries which naturally arise in the mind, but which surpass

the limited powers of the human understanding at present to determine. Of this, however, we may rest assured, that they were not created in vain; that they subserve purposes worthy of the infinite Creator; and that wherever he has exerted his power, there also he manifests his Wisdom and Beneficence.*

Such is a general outline of the leading facts connected with that system of which we form a part. Though the energies of Divine Power had never been exerted beyond the limits of this system, it would remain an eternal monument of the Wisdom and Omnipotence of its Author. Independent of the Sun, which is like a vast universe in itself, and of the numerous comets which are continually traversing its distant regions, it contains a mass of material existence, arranged in the most beautiful order, two thousand five hundred times larger than our globe. From late observations, there is the strongest reason to conclude, that the sun, along with all this vast assemblage of bodies, is carried through the regions of the universe, towards some distant point of space, or around some wide circumference, at the rate of more than sixty thousand miles an hour; and if so, it is highly probable, if not absolutely certain, that we shall never again occupy that portion of *absolute space*, through which we are this moment passing, during all the succeeding ages of eternity.

Such a glorious system must have been brought into existence, to subserve purposes worthy of the Infinite Wisdom and Benevolence of the Creator. To suppose that the distant globes, of which it is composed, with their magnificent apparatus of Rings and Moons, were created merely for the purpose of affording a few astronomers, in these latter times, a peep of them through their glasses, would be inconsistent with every principle of reason; and would be charging Him who is the source of Wisdom, with conduct which we would pronounce to be folly in the sons of men. Since it appears, so far as our observation extends, that matter exists solely for the sake of sensitive and intelligent beings, and that the Crea-

* A comet has lately been discovered, whose periodical revolution is found to be only 3 years and 107 days. At its greatest distance from the sun, it is within the orbit of Jupiter, and it possesses this peculiar advantage for observation, that it will become visible ten times in thirty-three years. It was last seen in June, 1822, by the astronomers in the observatory of Paramatta, New Holland, in positions very near to those which had been previously calculated by Mr. Enke. It is probable, that the observations which may hereafter be made on this comet, will lead to more definite and accurate views of the nature and destination of these singular bodies.

tor made nothing in vain; it is a conclusion to which we are necessarily led, that the planetary globes are inhabited by various orders of intellectual beings, who participate in the bounty, and celebrate the glory of their Creator.

When this idea is taken into consideration, it gives a striking emphasis to such sublime declarations of the Sacred Volume as these:—"All nations before him are as nothing—He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers—The nations are *as the drop of a bucket*—All the inhabitants of the world *are reputed as nothing* in his sight; and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth—Thou hast made heaven, and the heaven of heavens, with all their host; and thou preservest them all, and *the host of heaven worshippeth thee*—When I consider thy heavens, *what is man*, that thou art mindful of him!" If the race of Adam were the principal intelligences in the universe of God, such passages would be stripped of all their sublimity, would degenerate into mere hyperboles, and be almost without meaning. If man were the only rational being who inhabited the MATERIAL WORLD, as some arrogantly imagine, it would be no wonder at all, that God should be "mindful of him;" nor could "all the inhabitants of this world," with any propriety, be compared to "a drop of a bucket," and be "reputed as nothing in his sight."—Such declarations would be contrary to fact, if this supposition were admitted; for it assumes that man holds the *principal station* in the visible universe. The expressions —"The heavens, the heaven of heavens," and "the host of heaven worshipping God," would also, on this supposition, degenerate into something approaching to mere inanity. These expressions, if they signify any thing that is worthy of an inspired Teacher to communicate, evidently imply, that the universe is vast and extensive, beyond the range of human comprehension—that it is peopled with myriads of inhabitants —that these inhabitants are possessed of intellectual natures, capable of appreciating the perfections of their Creator—and that they pay him a tribute of rational adoration. "The host of heaven worshippeth thee." So that the language of Scripture is not only consistent with the doctrine of a plurality of worlds, but evidently supposes their existence to all the extent to which modern science can carry us. However vast the universe now appears—however numerous the worlds and systems of worlds, which may exist within its boundless range —the language of Scripture is sufficiently comprehensive and sublime, to express all the emotions which naturally arise in

the mind, when contemplating its structure—a characteristic which will apply to no other book, or pretended revelation. And this consideration shows not only the harmony which subsists between the discoveries of Revelation and the discoveries of Science, but also forms by itself, a strong presumptive evidence, that the Records of the Bible are authentic and divine.* Vast as the Solar System, we have now been contemplating, may appear, it is but a mere point in the map of creation. To a spectator placed in one of the stars of the seventh magnitude, not only the glories of this world, and the more resplendent scenes of the planet Saturn, but even the sun himself would entirely disappear, as if he were blotted out of existence. "Were the sun," says Mr. Addison, "which enlightens this part of the creation, with all the host of the planetary worlds that move about him, utterly extinguished and annihilated, they would not be missed by an eye that could take in the whole compass of nature, more than a grain of sand upon the sea shore. The space they possess is so exceedingly little, in comparison of the whole, that it would scarce make a blank in creation."

The Fixed Stars.—When we pass from the planetary system to other regions of creation, we have to traverse, in imagination, a space so immense, that it has hitherto baffled all the efforts of science to determine its extent. In these remote and immeasurable spaces, are placed those immense luminous bodies usually denominated the *fixed stars.* The nearest stars are, on good grounds, concluded to be at least *twenty billions* of miles distant from our globe—a distance through which *light* (the swiftest body in nature) could not travel in the space of three years ; and which a ball, moving at the rate of 500 miles an hour, would not traverse in four millions five hundred thousand years, or 750 times the period which has elapsed since the Mosaic creation. But how far they may be placed beyond this distance, no astronomer will pretend to determine. The following consideration will prove, to those unacquainted with the mathematical principles of astronomy, that the stars are placed at an immeasurable distance. When they are viewed through a telescope which magnifies objects a thousand times, they appear no larger than to the naked eye ; which circumstance shows, that though we were placed at the thousandth part of the distance from them at which we now are, they would still appear only as so many shining *points ;* for we should still be distant from the nearest

* See Appendix, No. VI.

of them, twenty thousand millions of miles: or, in other words, were we transported several thousands of millions of miles from the spot we now occupy, though their numbers would appear exceedingly increased, they would appear no larger than they do from our present station; and we behooved to be carried forward thousands of millions of miles further in a long succession, before their disks appeared to expand into large circles, like the moon. Dr. Herschel viewed the stars with telescopes, magnifying *six thousand times*, yet they still appeared only as brilliant points, without any sensible disks, or increase of diameter. This circumstance incontestibly proves the two following things:—1. That the stars are *luminous bodies*, which shine by their own native light; otherwise they could not be perceived at such vast distances. 2. That they are bodies of an immense size, not inferior to the sun; and many of them, it is probable, far exceed that luminary in bulk and splendor.

The stars, on account of the difference in their apparent magnitudes, have been distributed into several classes or orders. Those which appear largest are called stars of the *first* magnitude; next to those in lustre, stars of the *second* magnitude, and so on to stars of the *sixth* magnitude, which are the smallest that can be distinguished by the naked eye. Stars of the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, &c. magnitudes, which cannot be seen by the naked eye, are distinguished by the name of *telescopic* stars. Not more than a thousand stars can be distinguished by the naked eye, in the clearest winter's night; but, by means of the telescope, millions have been discovered. (See p. 39.)—And, as it is probable, that, by far the greater part lie beyond the reach of the best glasses which have been, or ever will be constructed by man—the real number of the stars may be presumed to be beyond all human calculation or conception, and perhaps beyond the grasp of angelic comprehension.

In consequence of recent discoveries, we have now the strongest reason to believe, that all the stars in the universe are arranged into clusters, or groupes, which astronomers distinguish by the name of NEBULÆ or STARRY SYSTEMS, each nebula consisting of many thousands of stars. The nearest nebula is that whitish space or zone, which is known by the name of the *Milky Way*, to which our sun is supposed to belong. It consists of many hundreds of thousands of stars. When Dr. Herschel examined this region, with his powerful telescopes, he found a portion of it only 15 degrees long and 2 broad, which contained *fifty thousand* stars large enough to

be distinctly counted; and he suspected twice as many more, which, for want of sufficient light in his telescope, he saw only now and then. More than two thousand five hundred nebulæ have already been observed; and, if each of them contain as many stars as the Milky Way, several hundreds of millions of stars must exist, even within that portion of the heavens which lies open to our observation.

It appears, from numerous observations, that *various changes* are occasionally taking place in the regions of the stars. Several stars have appeared for a while in the heavens, and then vanished from the sight. Some stars which were known to the ancients, cannot now be discovered; and stars are now distinctly visible, which were to them unknown. A few stars have gradually increased in brilliancy, while others have been constantly diminishing in lustre. Certain stars, to the number of 15, or upwards, are ascertained to have a periodical increase and decrease of their lustre, sometimes appearing like stars of the 1st or 2d magnitude, sometimes diminishing to the size of the 4th or 5th magnitude, and sometimes altogether disappearing to the naked eye. It also appears, that changes are taking place among the nebulæ—that several nebulæ are formed by the decomposition of larger nebulæ, and that many nebulæ of this kind are at present detaching themselves from the nebulæ of the Milky Way. These changes seem to indicate, that mighty movements and vast operations are continually going on in the distant regions of creation, under the superintendence of the Sovereign of the Universe, upon a scale of magnitude and grandeur which overwhelms the human understanding.

To explore, more extensively, the region of the starry firmament; to mark the changes that are taking place; to ascertain all the changeable stars; to determine the periodical variations of their light; the revolutions of double and triple stars; and the motions, and other phenomena peculiar to these great bodies, will furnish employment for future enlightened generations: and will, perhaps, form a part of the studies and investigations of superior intelligences, in a higher sphere of existence, during an indefinite lapse of ages.

If every one of these immense bodies be a Sun, equal or superior to ours, and encircled with a host of planetary worlds, as we have every reason to conclude, (see pp. 38, 64, 65,) how vast must be the extent of Creation! how numerous the worlds and beings which exist within its boundless range! and, how great, beyond all human or angelic conception, must be the Power and Intelligence of that glorious Being, who called this system from nothing into existence, and continually super-

intends all its movements! The mind is bewildered and confounded when it attempts to dwell on this subject; it feels the narrow limits of its present faculties; it longs for the powers of a seraph, to enable it to take a more expansive flight, into those regions which "eye hath not seen;" and, while destitute of these, and chained down to this obscure corner of creation, it can only exclaim, in the language of inspiration, "Who can by searching find out God?—Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite!—Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!—Who can utter the mighty acts of Jehovah, who can show forth all his praise!"

After what has been now stated in relation to the leading facts of astronomy, it would be needless to spend time in endeavouring to show its connexion with religion. It will be at once admitted, that all the huge globes of luminous and opaque matter, to which we have adverted, are the workmanship of Him "who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working;" and form a part of the dominions of that august Sovereign, "whose kingdom ruleth over all." And shall it ever be insinuated, that this subject has no relation to the great object of our adoration? and that it is of no importance in our views of the Divinity, whether we conceive his dominions as circumscribed within the limits of little more than 25,000 miles, or as embracing an extent which comprehends innumerable worlds? The objects around us in this sublunary sphere strikingly evince the superintendency, the wisdom and benevolence of the Creator; but this science demonstrates, beyond all other departments of human knowledge, the GRANDEUR AND MAGNIFICENCE of his operations: and raises the mind to sublimer views of his attributes than can be acquired by the contemplation of any other objects. A serious contemplation of the sublime objects which Astronomy has explored, must, therefore, have a tendency to inspire us with profound veneration of the Eternal Jehovah—to humble us in the dust before his august presence—to excite admiration of his condescension and grace in the work of redemption—to show us the littleness of this world, and the insignificancy of those riches and honors to which ambitious men aspire with so much labor and anxiety of mind—to demonstrate the glory and magnificence of God's universal kingdom—to convince us of the infinite sources of varied felicity which he has in his power to communicate to holy intelligences—to enliven our hopes of the splendors of that "exceeding great and eternal weight of glory" which will burst upon the spirits of good men, when they pass from this region of mortality—and to

nduce us to aspire with more lively ardor after that heavenly world, where the glories of the Deity, and the magnificence of his works will be more clearly unfolded.

If, then, such be the effects which the objects of astronomy have a tendency to produce on a devout and enlightened mind —to call in question the propriety of exhibiting such views in religious publications, or in the course of religious instruction, would be an approach to impiety, and an attempt to cover with a veil the most illustrious visible displays of Divine glory.— It forms a striking evidence of the depravity of man, as well as of his want of true taste, and of a discernment of what is excellent, that the grandeur of the nocturnal heavens, and the perfections of Deity they proclaim, are beheld with so much apathy and indifference by the bulk of mankind. Though "the heavens declare the glory of God," in the most solemn and impressive language, adapted to the comprehension of every kindred and every tribe, yet "a brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this." They can gaze upon these resplendent orbs with as little emotion as the ox that feeds on the grass, or as the horse that drags their carcasses along in their chariots. They have even attempted to ridicule the science of the heavens, to caricature those who have devoted themselves to such studies, and to treat with an indifference, mingled with contempt, the most august productions of Omnipotence. Such persons must be considered as exposing themselves to that Divine denunciation—"Because they regard not the works of Jehovah, neither consider the operations of his hands, he will destroy them and not build them up." If the structure of the heavens, and the immensity of worlds and beings they contain, were intended by the Creator to *adumbrate*, in some measure, his invisible perfections, and to produce a sublime and awful impression on all created intelligences, (see pp. 46, 54, 58,) it must imply a high degree of disrespect to the Divinity wilfully to overlook these astonishing scenes of Power and Intelligence. It is not a matter of mere taste or caprice, whether or not we direct our thoughts to such subjects, but an imperative duty to which we are frequently directed in the word of God; the *wilful neglect* of which, where there is an opportunity of attending to it, must subject us to all that is included in the threatening now specified, if there be any meaning in language.

That the great body of professed Christians are absolute strangers to the sublime sentiments which a serious contemplation of the heavens inspires, must be owing, in part, to the minds of Christian parents and teachers not having been

directed to such subject, or to the views they entertain respecting the relation of such contemplations to the objects of religion. In communicating religious instructions in reference to the attributes of God, the heavens are seldom referred to, except in such a vague and indefinite manner as can produce no deep nor vivid impression on the mind; and many pious persons, whose views have been confined to a narrow range of objects, have been disposed to declaim against such studies, as if they had a tendency to engender pride and self-conceit, and as if they were even dangerous to the interests of religion and piety. How very different were the feelings and the conduct of the sacred writers! They call upon every one of God's intelligent offspring to "stand still, and consider the wondrous works of the Most High;" and describe the profound emotions of piety which the contemplation of them produced on their own minds: "Lift up your eyes on high and behold! Who hath created these things! The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy-work.—When I *consider* thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained—what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him! Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, and the heaven of heavens, with all their host, and thou preservest them all; and the hosts of heaven worship thee. All the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord MADE THE HEAVENS: Honor and Majesty are before him.—Jehovah hath prepared his THRONE in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. Sing praises unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth, to him that rideth on the heaven of heavens. Ascribe ye POWER to our God; for his strength is in the heavens. Praise him for his mighty acts, praise him *according to his excellent greatness.*" If we would enter, with spirit, into such elevated strains of piety, we must not content ourselves with a passing and vacant stare at the orbs of heaven, as if they were only so many brilliant *studs* fixed in the canopy of the sky; but must "*consider*" them, with fixed attention, in all the lights in which revelation and science have exhibited them to our view, if we wish to praise God for his mighty works, and "*according to his excellent greatness.*" And, for this purpose, the conclusions deduced by those who have devoted themselves to celestial investigations, ought to be presented to the view of the intelligent Christian, that he may be enabled to "speak of the glory of Jehovah's kingdom, and to talk of his power."

Having, in the preceding sketches, considerably exceeded the limits originally prescribed for this department of my subject, I am reluctantly compelled to despatch the remaining sciences with a few brief notices.

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

The object of *Natural Philosophy* is, to observe and describe the phenomena of the material universe, with a view to discover their causes, and the laws by which the Almighty directs the movements of all bodies in heaven and on earth.—It embraces an investigation of the laws of gravitation, by which the planets are directed in their motions—the laws by which water, air, light, and heat are regulated, and the effects they produce in the various states in which they operate—the nature of colors, sounds, electricity, galvanism, and magnetism, and the laws of their operation—the causes which operate in the production of thunder, lightning, luminous and fiery meteors, hail, rain, snow, dew, and other atmospherical phenomena. In short, it embraces all the objects of Natural History formerly alluded to, with a view to ascertain the causes of their varied appearances, and the principles that operate in the changes to which they are subject; or, in other words, the laws by which the diversified phenomena of universal nature are produced and regulated. One subordinate use of the knowledge derived from this science, is, to enable us to construct all those mechanical engines which facilitate human labor, and increase the comforts of mankind, and all those instruments which tend to enlarge our views of the operations of nature. A still higher and nobler use to which philosophy is subservient, is, to demonstrate the Wisdom and Intelligence of the Great First Cause of all things, and to enlarge our conceptions of the admirable contrivance and design which appear in the different departments of universal nature. In this view, it may be considered as forming a branch of *Natural Theology*, or, in other words, a branch of the religion of angels, and of all other holy intelligences.

This department of Natural Science has generally been divided into the following branches:

I. MECHANICS.—This branch, considered in its most extensive range, includes an investigation of the general properties of matter; such as solidity, extension, divisibility, motion, attraction, and repulsion—the laws of gravitation, and of central forces, as they appear to operate in the motions of the celestial bodies; and on the surface of our globe, in the phenomena of falling bodies, the motions of projectiles, the vibra

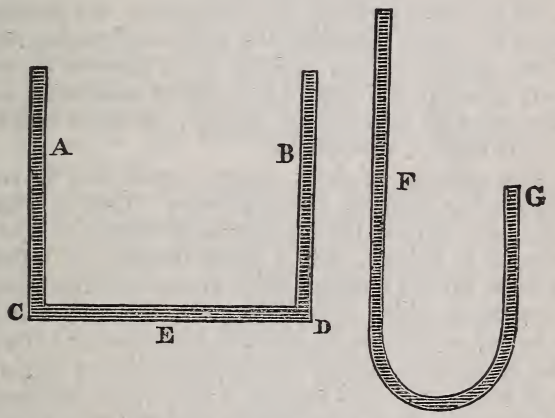
tion of pendulums, &c.—the theory of machines, the principles on which their energy depends; the properties of the mechanical powers—the *lever*, the *wheel*, and *axle*, the *pulley*, the *inclined plane*, the *wedge* and the *screw*—and the effects resulting from their various combinations. From the investigations of philosophers on these subjects, we learn the laws by which the great bodies of the universe are directed in their motions; the laws which bind together the different portions of matter on the surface of the earth, and which regulate the motions of animal, vegetable, and inanimate nature; and the principles on which cranes, mills, wheel-carriages, pile-engines, threshing-machines, and other engines are constructed; by means of which, man has been enabled to accomplish operations far beyond the limits of his own physical powers.

Without a knowledge of the laws of motion, and assistance from the combined effects of the mechanical powers, man would be a very limited being, his enjoyments would be few, and his active energies confined within a very narrow range. In a savage state, ignorant of manufactures, agriculture, architecture, navigation, and the other arts which depend upon mechanical combinations, he is exposed, without shelter, to the inclemencies of the season; he is unable to transport himself beyond seas and oceans, to visit other climes and other tribes of his fellow-men; he exists in the desert, comfortless and unimproved; the fertile soil, over which he roams, is covered with thorns, and briers, and thickets, for the haunt of beasts of prey; his enjoyments are little superior to those of the lion, the hyæna, and the elephant, while he is much their inferior, in point of agility and physical strength. But when Philosophy has once demonstrated the principles of mechanics, and introduced the practice of the useful Arts, "the wilderness and the solitary place are made glad, and the desert rejoices, and blossoms as the rose." Cities are founded, and gradually rise to opulence and splendor; palaces and temples are erected; the damp cavern, and the rush-built hut, are exchanged for the warm and comfortable apartments of a substantial mansion; ships are built, and navigated across the ocean; the treasures of one country are conveyed to another; an intercourse is carried on between the most distant tribes of mankind; commerce flourishes, and machinery of all kinds is erected, for facilitating human labor, and promoting the enjoyments of man. And when the principles and the practice of "pure and undefiled religion" accompany these physical and mechanical operations, love and affection diffuse their benign influence; the

prospect brightens as years roll on, and man advances, with pleasure and improvement, to the scene of his high destination.

II. Hydrostatics treats of *the pressure and equilibrium of fluids.* From the experiments which have been made in this branch of philosophy, the following important principles, among many others, have been deduced :—

(1.) *That the surface of all waters which have a communication whilst they are at rest, will be perfectly level.* This principle will be more clearly understood by an inspection of the following figures. If water be poured into the tube A, (Fig. 1.) it will run through the horizontal tube E, and rise in the opposite tube B, to the same height at which it stands at A.



It is on this principle that water is now conveyed under ground, through conduit pipes, and made to rise to the level of the fountain whence it is drawn. The city of Edinburgh, a considerable part of which is elevated above the level of the surrounding country, is supplied with water from a reservoir on the Pentland hills, several miles distant. The water is conveyed in leaden pipes down the declivity of the hill, along the interjacent plain, and up to the entrance of the castle, whence it is distributed to all parts of the city. If the point A represent the level of the reservoir, C D will represent the plain along which the water is conveyed, and B the elevation to which it rises on the castle hill. On the same principle, and in a similar manner, the city of London is supplied with water from the water-works at London Bridge. Had the ancients been acquainted with this simple but important principle, it would have saved them the labor and expense of rearing those

stupendous works of art, the *Aqueducts*, which consisted of numerous arches of a vast size, and sometimes piled one above another.

Fig. 2. represents the *syphon*, the action of which depends upon the pressure of the atmosphere. If this instrument be filled with water, or any other liquid, and the shorter leg G, plunged to the bottom of a cask, or other vessel, containing the same liquid, the water will run out at the longer leg F, till the vessel be emptied, in consequence of the atmospheric pressure upon the surface of the liquid. On this principle, water may be conveyed over a rising ground to any distance, provided the perpendicular height of the syphon above the surface of the water in the fountain, does not exceed 32 or 33 feet. On the same principle are constructed the *fountain at command*, the *cup of Tantalus*, and other entertaining devices. The same principle, too, enables us to account for springs which are sometimes found on the tops of mountains, and for the phenomena of *intermitting* springs, or those which flow and stop by regular alternations.

(2.) *Any quantity of fluid, however small, may be made to counterpoise any quantity, however large.* This is what has generally been termed the Hydrostatical Paradox; and from this principle it follows, that a given quantity of water may exert a force several hundred times greater or less, according to the manner in which it is employed. This force depends on the *height* of the column of water, independent of its quantity; for its *pressure* depends on its perpendicular height. By means of water conveyed through a very small perpendicular tube, of great length, a very strong hogshead has been burst to pieces, and the water scattered about with incredible force, On this principle, the *hydrostatic press*, and other engines of immense power have been constructed.

(3.) *Every body which is heavier than water, or which sinks in it, displaces so much of the water as is equal to the bulk of the body immersed in the water.* On this principle, the specific gravities, or comparative weight, of all bodies are determined. It appears to have been first ascertained by Archimedes, and, by means of it, he determined that the golden crown of the King of Syracuse had been adulterated by the workmen. From this principle we learn, among many other things, the specific gravity of the human body; and that four pounds of cork will preserve a person weighing 135 pounds from sinking, so that he may remain with his head completely above water.

Hydraulics, which has sometimes been treated as a distinct

department of mechanical philosophy, may be considered as a branch of hydrostatics. It teaches us what relates to the *motion of fluids*, and how to estimate their velocity and force. On the principle of this science, all machines worked by water are constructed—as steam-engines, water-mills, common and forcing pumps, syphons, fountains, and fire-engines.

III. PNEUMATICS.—This branch of philosophy treats of the nature and properties of the atmosphere, and of their effects on solid and fluid bodies. From this science we learn, that air has *weight*, and presses on all sides, like other fluids ; that the pressure of the atmosphere upon the top of a mountain, is less than on the plain beneath ; that it presses upon our bodies with a weight of several thousand pounds more at one time than at another ; that air can be compressed into forty thou sand times less space than it naturally occupies ; that it is of an elastic or expansive nature, and that the force of its spring is equal to its weight ; that its elasticity is increased by heat ; that it is necessary to the production of sound, the support of flame and animal life, and the germination and growth of all kinds of vegetables.

These positions are proved and illustrated by such experiments as the following :—The general *pressure* of the atmosphere is proved by such experiments as those detailed in No. II. of the *Appendix*. The following experiment proves that air is *compressible*. If a glass tube, open at one end, and closed at the other, be plunged with the open end downwards, into a tumbler of water, the water will rise a little way in the tube ; which shows, that the air which filled the tube is compressed by the water into a smaller space. The *elasticity* of air is proved by tying up a bladder, with a very small quantity of air within it, and putting it under the receiver of an air pump, when it will be seen gradually to inflate, till it becomes of its full size. A similar effect would take place, by carrying the bladder to the higher regions of the atmosphere. On the compression and elasticity of the air, depends the construction of that dangerous and destructive instrument, the Air-gun.

That it is capable of being rarified by heat, is proved by holding to the fire a half-blown bladder, lightly tied at the neck, when it will dilate to nearly its full size ; and if either a *full-blown* bladder, or a thin glass bubble filled with air is held to a strong fire, it will burst. The elasticity of the air is such, that Mr. Boyle, by means of an air pump, caused it to dilate till it occupied fourteen thousand times the space that it usually does.—That air is necessary to sound, flame, animal and

vegetable life, is proved by the following experiments :—When the receiver of an air-pump is exhausted of its air, a cat, a mouse, or a bird, placed in it, expires in a few moments, in the greatest agonies. A bell rung in the same situation produces no sound ; and a lighted candle is instantly extinguished. Similar experiments prove that air is necessary for the flight of birds, the ascent of smoke and vapours, the explosion of gun-powder, and the growth of plants ; and that all bodies descend equally swift in a place void of air ; a guinea and a feather being found to fall to the bottom of an exhausted receiver at the same instant.

On the principles which this science has established, have been constructed the air-pump, the barometer, the thermometer, the diving-bell, the hygrometer, the condenser, and various other instruments, which have contributed to the comfort of human life, and to the enlargement of our knowledge of the constitution of nature.

IV. Acoustics.—This science treats of the nature, the phenomena, and the laws of *sound*, and the theory of musical concord and harmony. From the experiments which have been made on this subject, we learn, that air is essential to the production of sound ; that it arises from *vibrations* in the air, communicated to it by vibrations of the sounding body ; that these vibrations, or aerial pulses, are propagated all around in a spherical undulatory manner ; that their density decreases, as the squares of the distances from the sounding body increase ; that they are propagated together in great numbers from different bodies, without disturbance or confusion, as is evident from concerts of musical instruments ; that water, timber, and flannel, are also good conductors of sound ; that sound travels at the rate of 1142 feet in a second, or about thirteen miles in a minute ; that the softest whisper flies as fast as the loudest thunder ; and that the utmost limits, within which the loudest sounds, produced by artificial means, can be heard, is 180 or 200 miles ;* that sound striking against an obstacle, as the wall of a house, may, like light, be reflected, and produce another sound, which is called an *echo ;* and that, after it has been reflected from several places, it may be collected into one point or focus, where it will be more audible than in any other

* In the war between England and Holland, in 1672, the noise of the guns was heard in those parts of Wales which were estimated to be two hundred miles distant from the scene of action. But the sounds produced by volcanoes have been heard at a much greater distance ; some instances of which are stated in Chap. IV. Sect. 2. Several other facts in relation to sound, are detailed in Chap. III. Art. *Acoustic Tunnels.*

place. On these principles, whispering galleries, speaking trumpets, and other acoustic instruments are constructed.

V. Optics.—This branch of philosophy treats of vision, light, and colors, and of the various phenomena of visible objects produced by the rays of light, reflected from mirrors, or transmitted through lenses. From this science we learn, that light flies at the rate of nearly twelve millions of miles every minute—that it moves in straight lines—that its particles may be several thousands of miles distant from each other—that every visible body emits particles of light from its surface, in all directions—that the particles of light are *exceedingly small;* for a lighted candle will fill a cubical space of two miles every way with its rays, before it has lost the least sensible part of its substance; and millions of rays, from a thousand objects, will pass through a hole not larger than the point of a needle, and convey to the mind an idea of the form, position, and color of every individual object—that the intensity, or degree of light decreases, as the square of the distance from the luminous body increases; that is, at two yards' distance from a candle, we shall have only the fourth part of the light we should have at the distance of one yard; at three yards' distance, the ninth part; at four yards, the sixteenth part, and so on—that glass *lenses* may be ground into the following forms; *plano-convex*, *plano-concave*, *double convex*, *double concave*, and *meniscus*, that is, convex on one side, and concave on the other—that specula, or mirrors, may be ground into either a spherical, parabolical, or cylindrical form—that, by means of such mirrors and lenses, the rays of light may be so modified as to proceed either in a *diverging*, *converging*, or *parallel* direction, and the images of visible objects represented in a variety of new *forms*, *positions*, and *magnitudes*—that every ray of white light may be separated into seven primary colors: *red*, *orange*, *yellow*, *green*, *blue*, *indigo*, and *violet*—that the variegated coloring which appears on the face of nature is not in the objects themselves, but in the light which falls upon them—that the *rainbow* is produced by the refraction and reflection of the solar rays in the drops of falling rain—that the rays of light are refracted, or bent out of their course, when they fall upon glass, water, and other mediums—that the light of the sun may be collected into a point or focus, and made to produce a heat more intense than that of a furnace*—that the rays from visible objects, when

* This is produced by means of lenses, or mirrors of a large diameter, called burning-glasses. By these instruments the hardest metals, on which common fires, and even glass-house furnaces could produce no effect, have been melted in a few seconds. M. Villette, a Frenchman, nearly a cen-

reflected from a concave mirror, converge to a focus, and paint an image of the objects before it, and that when they pass through a convex glass, they depict an image behind it.

On these and other principles demonstrated by this science, the Camera Obscura, the Magic Lantern, the Phantasmagoria, the Kaleidoscope, the Heliostata, the Micrometer—Spectacles, Opera-Glasses, Prisms, single, compound, lucernal, and solar Microscopes, reflecting and refracting Telescopes, and other optical instruments, have been constructed, by means of which the natural powers of human vision have been wonderfully increased, and our prospects into the works of God extended far beyond what former ages could have conceived.

VI. ELECTRICITY.—This name has been given to a science which explains and illustrates the operations of a very subtile fluid called *the electric fluid*, which appears to pervade every part of nature, and to be one of the chief agents employed in producing many of the phenomena of the material world. If a piece of amber, sealing wax, or sulphur, be rubbed with a piece of flannel, it will acquire the power of attracting small bits of paper, feathers, or other light substances. If a tube of glass, two or three feet in length, and an inch or two in diameter, be rubbed pretty hard, in a dark room, with a piece of dry woollen cloth, besides attracting light substances, it will emit flashes of fire, attended with a crackling noise. This luminous matter is called electricity, or the *electric fluid*. If a large globe or cylinder of glass, be turned rapidly round, and made to rub against a cushion, streams and large sparks of bluish flame will be elicited, which will fly round the glass, attract light bodies, and produce a pungent sensation if the hand be held to it. This glass, with all its requisite apparatus, is called an *electrical machine*. It is found, that this fluid will pass along some bodies, and not along others. The bodies over which it pass freely

tury ago constructed a mirror, three feet eleven inches in diameter, and three feet two inches in focal distance, which melted *copper ore* in eight seconds, *iron ore* in twenty-four seconds, a fish's tooth in thirty-two seconds, *cast iron* in sixteen seconds, a silver sixpence in seven seconds, and *tin* in three seconds. This mirror condensed the solar rays 17,257 times, a degree of heat which is about *four hundred and ninety times* greater than common fire. Mr. Parker, of London, constructed a lens three feet in diameter, and six feet eight inches focus, which weighed 212 pounds. It melted twenty grains of gold in four seconds, and ten grains of platina in three seconds. The power of burning glasses is, *as the area of the lens directly, and the square of the focus distance inversely*—or, in other words, the broader the mirror or lens, and the shorter the focal distance, the more intense is the heat produced by such instruments. A globular decanter of water makes a powerful burning-glass; and house furniture has been set on fire by incautiously exposing it to the rays of the sun.

are water, and most other fluids, except oil and the aerial fluids; iron, copper, lead, and, in general all the metals, semi-metals, and metallic ores; which are, therefore, called *conductors* of electricity. But it will not pass over glass, resin, wax, sulphur, silk, baked woods, or dry woollen substances; nor through air, except by force, *in sparks*, to short distances. These bodies are, therefore, called *non-conductors*.

The following facts, among others, have been ascertained respecting this wonderful agent:—That all bodies with which we are acquainted, possess a greater or less share of this fluid —that the quantity usually belonging to any body produces no sensible effects; but when any surface becomes possessed of *more* or *less* than its natural share, it exhibits certain appearances, in the form of light, sound, attraction, or repulsion, which are ascribed to the power called *electric*—that there are two different species of the electrical fluid, or, at least, two different modifications of the same general principle, termed *positive* and *negative* electricity—that positive and negative electricity always accompany each other; for if a substance acquire the one, the body with which it is rubbed acquires the the other—that it moves with amazing rapidity; having been transmitted through wire of several miles in length, without taking up any sensible space of time; and, therefore, it is not improbable, that were an insulated conducting substance extended from one continent to another, it might be made to fly to the remotest regions of the earth in a few seconds of time —that it has a power of suddenly contracting the muscles of animals, or of giving a *shock* to the animal frame—that this shock may be communicated, at the same instant, to a hundred persons, or to an indefinite number who form a circle, by joining their hands together—that it may be accumulated to such a degree as to kill the largest animals—that vivid sparks of this fluid, attended with a crackling noise, may be drawn from different parts of the human body, when the person is *insulated*, or stands upon a stool supported by glass feet—that electricity sets fire to gun-powder, spirits of wine, and other inflammable substances—that it melts iron wire, and destroys the polarity of the magnetic needle—that it augments the natural evaporation of fluids, promotes the vegetation of plants, and increases the insensible perspiration of animals; and can be drawn from the clouds by means of electrical kites, and other elevated conductors. By means of the electrical power, small models of machinery have been set in action: orreries to represent the movements of the planets, have been put in motion; and small bells have been set a-ringing for a length

of time; and, in consequence of the knowledge we have acquired of the mode of its operation in the system of nature, the lightnings of heaven have been arrested in their course, and constrained to descend to the earth, without producing any injurious effects.

From these, and a variety of other facts and experiments, it is now fully ascertained, that *lightning* and electricity are identical; and that it is the prime agent in producing the awful phenomena of a thunder-storm; the lightning being the rapid motion of vast masses of electric matter, and *thunder* the *noise* with its echoes, produced by the rapid motion of the lightning through the atmosphere.—There can be little doubt that, in combination with steam, the gasses, and other agents, it also produces many of the terrific phenomena of earthquakes, volcanoes, whirlwinds, water-spouts, and hurricanes, and the sublime coruscations of the *aurora borealis*. In the operations of this powerful fluid we behold a striking display of the sovereignty and majestic agency of God. In directing its energies, "his way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet; the heavens are covered with sackcloth, the mountains quake before him, the hills melt, the earth is burned at his presence, the rocks are thrown down by him:" Neh. i. 3—6. It is easy to conceive, that, by a few slight modifications produced by the hand of Omnipotence, this powerful fluid might become the agent of producing either the most awful and tremendous, or the most glorious and transporting scenes, over every region of our globe. As it now operates, it is calculated to inspire us rather with awe and terror than with admiration and joy; and to lead our thoughts to a consideration of the state of man as a depraved intelligence, and a rebel against his Maker.

VII. Galvanism is intimately connected with electricity, though it is generally considered as a branch of Chemistry. It is only another mode of exciting electrical action. In electricity the effects are produced chiefly by *mechanical* action; but the effects of Galvanism are produced by the *chemical* action of bodies upon each other. If we take a piece of zinc, and place it under the tongue, and lay a piece of silver, as big as a half-crown, above it; by bringing the outer edges of these pieces in contact, we shall immediately experience a peculiar and disagreeable taste, like that of copper. The same thing may be noticed with a guinea and a piece of charcoal. If a person, in the dark, put a slip of tinfoil upon one of his eyes, and a piece of silver in his mouth, by causing these pieces to communicate, a faint flash will appear before his eyes. If a

living frog or a fish, having a slip of tinfoil pasted upon its back, be placed upon a piece of zinc, by forming a communication between the zinc and tinfoil, the spasms of the muscles are excited. These and similar effects are produced by that modification of electricity which has been termed *Galvanism.* Three different conductors, or what is called *a galvanic circle,* are requisite to produce such effects. A piece of copper, a piece of flannel, moistened with water or acid, and a piece of zinc, laid upon one another, form a circle; and if this circle be repeated a number of times, a galvanic pile or battery may be formed capable of giving a powerful shock. The most common and convenient form, however, of a battery, is found to be a trough of baked wood, three or four inches deep and as many wide. In the sides are grooves, opposite to each other, into each of which is placed a double metallic plate, of zinc and copper soldered together, and the cells are then filled either with salt and water, or with a solution of nitrous acid and water.

By means of the galvanic agency, a variety of surprising effects have been produced. Gunpowder, cotton, and other inflammable substances, have been inflamed—charcoal has been made to burn, with a most brilliant and beautiful white flame—water has been decomposed into its elementary parts —metals have been melted and set on fire—fragments of diamond, charcoal, and plumbago, have been dispersed, as if they had been evaporated—platina, the hardest and heaviest of the metals, has been melted as readily as wax in the flame of a candle—the sapphire, quartz, magnesia, lime, and the firmest compounds in nature, have been made to enter into fusion.—Its effects on the animal system are no less surprising. When applied to a fowl or a rabbit, immediately after life is extinct, it produces the most strange and violent convulsions on the nervous and muscular system, as if the vital functions were again revived; and when applied to the human body after death, the stimulus has produced the most horrible contortions and grimaces in the muscles of the head and face; and the most rapid movements in the hands and feet.

The galvanic agency enables us to account for the following among other facts:—Why porter has a different and more pleasant taste, when drunk out of a pewter vessel, than out of glass or earthen ware,—why a silver spoon is discolored when used in eating eggs,—why the limbs of people, under amputation, are sometimes convulsed by the application of the instruments,—why pure mercury is oxydized when amalgamated with tin,—why works of metal, which are soldered together,

soon tarnish in the places where the metals are joined,—and why the copper sheathing of ships, when fastened with iron nails, are soon corroded about the place of contact. In all these cases a galvanic circle is formed, which produces the effects. We have reason to believe, that, in combination with the discoveries which modern chemistry is daily unfolding, the agencies of this fluid will enable us to carry the arts forward towards perfection, and to trace the secret causes of some of the sublimest phenomena of nature.

VIII. Magnetism.—This department of philosophy describes the phenomena, and the properties of the *loadstone*, or natural magnet. The natural magnet is a hard dark-colored mineral body, and is usually found in iron mines. The following are some of its characteristic properties :—1. It attracts iron and steel, and all substances which contain iron in its metallic state. 2. If a magnet be suspended by a thread, or nicely poised on a pivot, or placed on a piece of wood, and set to float in a basin of water, one end will constantly point nearly towards the north pole of the earth, and the other towards the south ; and, hence, these parts of the magnet have been called the *north* and *south poles*. 3. When the north pole of one magnet is presented near to the south pole of another, they will *attract* each other ; but if the north pole of one be presented to the north pole of another, or a south pole to a south, they will *repel* each other. 4. A magnet placed in such a manner as to be entirely at liberty, inclines one of its poles to the horizon, and of course elevates the other above it. This property is called the *dipping* of the magnet. 5. Magnets do not point directly north and south ; but in different parts of the world with a different *declination* eastward or westward of the north ; it is also different at the same place at different times. In London, and in most places of Great Britain, the magnetic needle, at present, points about 24 degrees to the west of the north. For more than 160 years it has been gradually declining from the north to the west ; but seems of late to have begun its declination to the eastward. 6. Any magnet may be made to communicate the properties now mentioned, to any piece of iron or steel. For example, by gently rubbing a penknife with a magnet, it will be immediately invested with the property of attracting needles, or small pieces of iron or steel. 7. Heat weakens the power of a magnet, and the gradual addition of weight increases the magnetic power. 8. The properties of the magnet are not affected either by the presence or the absence of air ; and the magnetic attraction is not in the least diminished by the interposition of

any bodies except iron. A magnet will equally affect the needle of a pocket compass, when a thick board is placed between them as when it is removed.—It has been lately discovered, that the *violet rays of the solar spectrum*, when condensed with a convex glass, and made to pass along a piece of steel, have the power of communicating to it the magnetic virtue.

The cause which produces these singular properties of the magnet, has hitherto remained a mystery; but the knowledge of the *polarity* of the magnet has been applied to a most important practical purpose. By means of it, man has now acquired the dominion of the ocean, and has learned to trace his course through the pathless deep to every region of the globe. There can be little doubt that magnetism has an intimate connexion with electricity, galvanism, light, heat, and chemical action; and the discoveries which have been lately made, and the experiments which are now making by Morichini, Oersted, Abraham, Hansteen, Barlow, Beaufoy, and Scoresby, promise to throw some light on this mysterious agent, and on the phenomena of nature with which it is connected.

Such is a faint outline of some of the interesting subjects which Natural Philosophy embraces. Its relation to Religion will appear from the following considerations:—

1. Its researches have led to the invention of machines, engines, and instruments of various kinds, which augment the energies, increase the comforts, and promote the general improvement of mankind; and these objects are inseparably connected with the propagation of Christianity through the world. If we admit, that, in future ages, the religion of the Bible will shed its benign influence over all nations—that the external condition of the human race will then be prosperous and greatly meliorated beyond what it has ever been—and, that no *miraculous interposition* of Deity is to be expected to bring about such desirable events—it will follow, that such objects can be accomplished only in the ordinary course of Providence, by rational investigations into the principles and powers of Nature, and the application of the inventions of science to the great objects of religion, and of human improvement, as I shall endeavour briefly to illustrate in the following chapter. As the destructive effects of many physical agents in the present constitution of our globe, are, doubtless, a consequence of the sin and depravity of man; we have reason to believe that, when the economy of nature shall be more extensively and minutely investigated, and the minds of men

directed to apply their discoveries to philanthropic and religious objects, they will be enabled to counteract, in a great measure, those devastations and fatal effects which are now produced by several of the powers of nature. The general happiness of all ranks, which will be connected with the universal extension of Christianity, necessarily supposes, that this object will be accomplished; for, were a dread of destruction from the elements of nature frequently to agitate the mind, as at present, no permanent tranquillity would be enjoyed; nor would that ancient prediction, in reference to this era, receive its full accomplishment, that "there shall be *nothing to hurt or destroy* in all God's holy mountain, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord." And since miraculous interpositions are not to be expected, to what quarter can we look for those subordinate agencies by which this object is to be effected, but to the discoveries and inventions of philosophical science?

Science has already enabled us to remedy many of those evils which are the accidental effects of the operation of physical agents. For example—the discoveries of the philosopher, with respect to the nature of the electric fluid, have enabled us to construct conductors for preserving buildings from the stroke of *lightning:* and we have every reason to hope, that, in the progress of electric, galvanic, and chemical science, more complete thunder guards, applicable to all the situations in which a person may be exposed, will be invented. Nay, our increasing knowledge of the electric fluid, and of the chemical agents which concur in its operation, may enable us to dissipate thunder-storms altogether, by disturbing the electricity of the clouds by means of a series of elevated artificial conductors. This is not only possible, but has already been in some degree effected. The celebrated Euler imforms us, in his "Letters to a German Princess," that he corresponded with a Moravian priest, named *Divisch*, who assured him, "that he had averted, during a whole summer, every thunder-storm which threatened his own habitation, and the neighbourhood, by means of a machine constructed on the principles of electricity—that the machinery sensibly attracted the clouds, and constrained them to descend quietly in a distillation, without any but a very distant thunder clap." Euler assures us that "the fact is undoubted, and confirmed by irresistable proof." Yea, not only may the destructive effects of lightning be averted by the inventions of philosophy, but its agency may be rendered subservient to human industry, and made to act as a mechanical power. This effect, too, has been partially accomplished. About the year 1811, in the village of Philips

thal, in Eastern Prussia, an attempt was made to split an immense stone into a multitude of pieces, by means of lightning. A bar of iron, in the form of a conductor, was previously fixed to the stone, and the experiment was attended with the most complete success; for, during the very first thunder-storm, the lightning burst the stone without displacing it.*

It is, therefore, probable, that in the future ages of the world, this terrific meteor, and other destructive agents, which now produce so much alarm, and so many disastrous effects, may, by the aid of philosophy, be brought under the control of man, and be made to minister to his enjoyment.

The electric fluid has also been, in many instances, successfully applied in curing palsies, rheumatisms, spasms, obstructions, and inflammation; and it is known to have a peculiar effect on the nervous system. Lightning has been known to restore the blind to a temporary enjoyment of sight. Mr. Campbell of Succoth, in Dumbartonshire, who had been blind for several years, was led by his servant one evening through the streets of Glasgow, during a terrible thunder-storm. The lightning sometimes fluttered along the streets for a quarter of a minute without ceasing. While this fluttering lasted, Mr. C. saw the street distinctly, and the changes which had been made in that part by taking down one of the city gates. When the storm was over, his entire blindness returned.—A still more remarkable instance is stated, along with this, under the article THUNDER, in Dr. Gleig's *Supp. to Ency. Brit.* which was written by the late Professor Robinson. It is also possible that barren deserts might be enriched with fertility, and immense portions of the desolate wastes of our globe prepared for the support and accommodation of human beings, by arresting the clouds, and drawing down their electrical virtue and their watery treasures by means of an extended series of elevated metallic conductors. What has been now stated is only one instance, out of many, which might be adduced, of the extensive and beneficial effects which may be produced, in future ages, by the application of the discoveries of natural science.

2. A knowledge of Natural Philosophy enables us to detect *pretended* miracles, and to discriminate between those phenomena which are produced by the powers of nature, and the supposed effects of diabolical influence. It has been chiefly owing to ignorance of the principles of natural science, that mankind, in all ages, have been so easily imposed upon by pre-

* See Monthly Magazine, vol. 32, p. 162.

tenders to supernatural powers. It is owing to the same cause, that superstitious notions and vain alarms have spread their influence so extensively among the lower ranks of the population of every country. The pretended miracles by which Pagan and Popish Priests endeavour to support the authority of their respective religious systems, and every species of degrading superstition, vanish into smoke, when examined by the light of modern science; and there can be no question that an enlightened Missionary would, in many instances, find the principles and the instruments of natural philosophy important auxiliaries in undermining the fabric of heathen idolatry and priestcraft. They tend to dissipate a thousand idle terrors which haunt and agitate the human mind; to detect a thousand kinds of imposture by which it has been held in cruel bondage; and to prevent the perpetration of those deeds of cruelty which have uniformly marked the reign of Superstition.* Had our forefathers connected a knowledge of this subject with their study of the Scriptures, they would not have brought upon themselves that indelible disgrace which now attaches to their memories, on account of their having condemned and burned at the stake hundreds of unhappy women, accused of crimes of which they could not possibly have been guilty. In New-England, towards the close of the 17th century, the witchcraft phrensy rose so high, that the execution of witches became a calamity more dreadful than the sword or the pestilence. Not only old women, but children of ten years were put to death; young girls were stripped naked, and the marks of witchcraft searched for upon their bodies with the most indecent curiosity; and those spots of the scurvy which age impresses upon the bodies of old men, were taken for evident signs of infernal power. So that ignorance of the laws and phenomena of nature has led even Christians

* Mr. Douglas, in his "Hints on Missions," formerly referred to, when speaking of the facilities which Christians now possess for extensive missionary exertions, suggests, that Natural Philosophy might be an important auxiliary to Christian Missionaries. "All the ancient 'war weapons of victory,' excepting miracles, are at their disposal; and new instruments of still greater potency, which the science of the latter days has been accumulating for a universal revolution of the mind, are ready to be brought into action, upon a scale of overpowering magnitude. Even the single resource which is lost may yet be recompensed by equivalents, and a substitute, in many respects, may be found for miracles. The first effect of a miracle is, to rouse the attention, and to overawe opposing prejudices; the second to afford a proof of the religion of which it is a sealing accompaniment. *The first object might be gained by the natural magic of experimental Philosophy:* and as to the second, the difference in the proof from miracles, lies rather in its being more circuitous, than in its being less conclusive at the present day, than in the times of the Apostles."

to commit acts of injustice and horrid cruelty. For, let it be remembered, that it was *Christian* magistrates and ministers, under a pretended zeal for the honor of God, who sanctioned such cruel and unrighteous decrees. This consideration, viewed in connection with many others, tends to show, that the Christian revelation, considered abstractly by itself, without a reference to the visible system of the universe, is not sufficient for all the purposes for which it was intended; as, on the other hand, the study of the works of nature is not sufficient of itself to lead the mind to the true knowledge of God, without the aid of the discoveries derived from the sacred oracles. For, although the Bible has been in the hands of Protestant Christians ever since the reformation, yet it is only since the light of modern science began to diffuse its influence, that the superstitions of the dark ages, and the vulgar notions respecting witchcraft, necromancy, and other species of infernal agency, began to vanish, even from the minds of Christian teachers; as is evident from the writing of many eminent divines who flourished during the 16th and 17th centuries. As the two revelations which God has given us throw a mutual lustre on each other; the one must always be considered as incomplete without the other. Both are necessary in order "to made the man of God perfect," and to enable him to prosecute, with intelligence and success, the great objects of religion; and the Christian minister who affects to despise the aids of science in the cause of religion, has yet much to learn with respect to some of the grand bearings of the Christian system.

3. The investigations of natural philosophy *unfold to us the incessant agency of God*, and the plans by which his wise and benevolent designs in the system of nature are accomplished. From the immeasurable globes of heaven, down to the minutest atoms, we perceive a regular chain of causes and effects, conspiring, in a thousand different modes, to accomplish the purposes of infinite wisdom and goodness. The operation of central forces, and of the law of gravitation on the earth and in the heavens—the hydrostatical laws which regulate the pressure and the motion of fluids—the chemical properties of the atmosphere, its undulatory, refractive, and reflective powers—the motion of the rays of light, and the infinite variety of effects they produce—the process of evaporation—the agencies of electricity and galvanism—the properties of the magnet, and the chemical action of acids and alkalies, and of the minutest particles of matter upon each other—ought to be viewed as so many modifications of the agency of Deity, and

as manifestations of his Wisdom, in carrying forward those plans which regard the interests of his universal kingdom: just as we consider the rise and fall of empires, the revolutions of nations, and the circulation of the Scriptures in heathen lands, as so many acts of his moral administration as the Governor of mankind. For let it be carefully remembered that all these physical agencies have ultimately a moral and intellectual bearing; and are essentially connected with every other part of God's providential procedure. Though we may be apt to consider them as so many detached and insulated pieces of machinery, with which we have little concern, or may even disdain to notice their mode of operation; yet, in the All-comprehensive mind of Him who takes in, at one glance, the whole chain of causes and effects, they are as essentially connected with his ultimate purposes, and the eternal destiny of man, as are the revelations of his word.—Were a single principle or motion which now animates the system of nature to cease—were the agencies of electricity, for example, or the principle of evaporation to be destroyed—the physical constitution of our globe would instantly be deranged; nature would be thrown into confusion; and the sentient and intellectual beings that now inhabit the earth would either be destroyed, or plunged into an abyss of misery. If, therefore, we admit that the *moral* agency of God is worthy of our contemplation, we ought to consider his physical operations also as no less worthy of our study and investigation; since they form the groundwork of all his other manifestations.

There is nothing, however, which so strikingly characterizes the bulk of mankind, and even the great mass of the Christian world, as that apathy and indifference with which they view the wonders of creation which surround them. They can look on all that is grand, and beautiful, and beneficent in nature, without feeling the least sentiment of admiration, or of gratitude to that Being who is incessantly operating within them and around them; and they are disposed to consider the experiments of philosophers, by which the wonderful agency of God is unveiled, as only so many toys and amusements for the entertainment of children. They would prefer the paltry entertainments of a card-table, of a ball-room, or of a gossiping party, to the inspection of the nicest pieces of Divine mechanism, and to the contemplation of the most august scene in nature. However lightly some religionists may be disposed to treat this subject, that spirit of indifference with which the visible works of God are treated, must be considered as flowing from the same *depraved principle*, which leads multitudes

to reject the revelations of the Bible, and to trifle with their everlasting interests. "Man," says Rollin, "lives in the midst of a world of which he is the sovereign, as a stranger, who looks with indifference upon all that passes in it, and as if it was not his concern. The universe, in all its parts, declares and points out its Author; but, for the most part, to the deaf and blind, who have neither ears to hear, nor eyes to see. One of the greatest services that philosophy can do us, is to awaken us from this drowsiness, and rouse us from this lethargy, which is a dishonor to humanity, and in a manner reduces us below the beasts, whose stupidity is the consequence of their nature, and not the effect of neglect or indifference. It awakens our curiosity, it excites our attention, and leads us as it were by the hand, through all the parts of nature, to induce us to study and search ut the wonderful works of it."—*Belles Lettres*, vol. 4.

Since, therefore, the science of natural philosophy is conversant about the works of the Almighty, and its investigations have a direct tendency to illustrate the perfections of his nature, to unveil the plan of his operations, to unfold the laws by which he governs the kingdom of universal nature, and to display the order, symmetry, and proportion, which reign throughout the whole—it would be needless to enter into any further process of reasoning, to show that the study of it is connected with the great objects of religion. Whatever studies tend to raise our minds to the Supreme Ruler of all worlds—to expand our views of his infinite knowledge and wisdom, to excite our gratitude and our admiration of the beneficent designs which appear in all his arrangements—to guard us against erroneous conceptions of his providential procedure—and to furnish us with important auxiliaries for extending the influence of his religion through the world—must always be interesting to every Christian who wishes to enlarge his intellectual views, and to make progress in the knowledge of God.

CHEMISTRY.

This science, which is intimately related to the preceding, has for its object to ascertain the ingredients, or first principles, of which all matter is composed—to examine the compounds formed by the combination of these ingredients—to investigate those changes in natural bodies, which are not accompanied with *sensible* motion, and the nature of the power which produces these combinations and changes.

Within the limits of the last half century, the empire of

Chemistry has been wonderfully extended. From an obscure and humble place among the objects of study, it has risen to a high and dignified station among those sciences which improve and adorn the human mind. No longer confined to the paltry and mercenary object of searching for the philosopher's stone, or of furnishing a little amusement, it now extends its sway over all the arts which minister to the comfort and improvement of social life, and over every species of animate and inanimate matter, within the range of human investigation. "The forms and appearances," (says Sir Humphry Davy,) "of the beings and substances of the external world, are almost infinitely various, and they are in a state of continued alteration. Even the earth itself, throughout its whole surface, undergoes modifications. Acted on by moisture and air, it affords the food of plants; an immense number of vegetable productions arise from apparently the same materials; these become the substance of animals; one species of animal matter is converted into another; the most perfect and beautiful of the forms of organized life ultimately decay, and are resolved into inorganic aggregates; and the same elementary substances, differently arranged, are contained in the inert soil; or bloom, and emit fragrance in the flower; or become, in animals, the active organs of mind and intelligence. In artificial operations, changes of the same order occur: substances having the characters of earth, are converted into metals; clays and sands are united, so as to become porcelain; earths and alkalies are combined into glass; acrid and corrosive matters are formed from tasteless substances; colors are fixed upon stuffs; or changed, or made to disappear; and the productions of the vegetable, mineral, and animal kingdoms, are converted into new forms, and made subservient to the purposes of civilized life.—To trace, in detail, these diversified and complicated phenomena; to arrange them, and deduce general laws from their analogies, is the business of chemistry."—*Elements of Chemical Philosophy.*

Chemists have arranged the *general forms of matter* into the four following classes. The *first* class consists of SOLIDS, which form the principal parts of the globe, and which differ from each other in hardness, color, opacity, transparency, density, and other properties. The *second* class consists of FLUIDS, such as water, oils, spirits, &c., whose parts possess freedom of motion, and require great mechanical force to make them occupy a smaller space. The *third* class comprehends ELASTIC FLUIDS, or GASES, which exist freely in the atmosphere; but may be confined by solids and fluids, and

their properties examined. Their parts are highly moveable compressible, and expansive; they are all transparent; they present two or three varieties of color; and they differ greatly in density. The *fourth* class comprehends ETHEREAL SUBSTANCES, which are known to us only in their states of motion. when acting upon our organs of sense, and which are not susceptible of being confined. Such are the *rays of light*, and *radiant heat*, which are incessantly in motion, throughout the spaces that intervene between our globe, and the sun and the stars.—Chemists divide the substances in nature also into SIMPLE and COMPOUND. SIMPLE SUBSTANCES are those which have never yet been decomposed, nor formed by art. COMPOUND SUBSTANCES are those which are formed by the union of two or more simple substances. The following are all the *simple* substances, with which we are at present acquainted: CALORIC, LIGHT, OXYGEN, NITROGEN, CARBON, HYDROGEN, SULPHUR, PHOSPHORUS, the METALS, and some of the EARTHS.—All that I propose, under this article, is, simply to state some of the properties of two or three of these simple substances.

CALORIC, or elementary fire, is the name now given by chemists to that element or property, which, combined with various bodies, produces the sensation of *heat*, while it is passing from one body to another. This substance appears to pervade the whole system of nature. There are six different sources, from whence Caloric may be procured. It may be produced by *combustion*, in which process the oxygen gas of the atmosphere is decomposed, and caloric, one of its component parts, set at liberty—by *friction*, or the rubbing of two substances against each other—by *percussion*, as the striking of steel against a piece of flint—by *the mixture of two or more substances;* as when sulphuric acid is poured upon water or magnesia—by *electricity and galvanism*. The discharge of an electric or galvanic battery, will produce a more intense degree of heat than any other means whatever. But the principal, and probably the original source of caloric, is the SUN, which furnishes the earth with a regular supply for the support and nourishment of the animal and vegetable tribes. From this source it moves at the rate of 195,000 miles in a second of time; for it has been already stated, that the sun sends forth rays of heat, which are distinct from those which produce illumination, and which accompany them in their course through the ethereal regions.

Caloric is the cause of *fluidity*, in all substances which are capable of becoming fluid. A certain portion, or *dose* of it,

reduces a solid body to the state of an incompressible fluid; a larger portion brings it to the state of an aeriform or gaseous fluid. Thus, a certain portion of caloric reduces ice to a state of water; a larger portion converts it into steam or vapor. There is reason to believe, that the hardest rocks, the densest metals, and every solid substance on the face of the earth, might be converted into a fluid, and even into a gas, were they submitted to the action of a very high temperature. This substance is called *sensible* caloric, when it produces the sensation of *heat;* and *latent* caloric, when it forms an insensible part of the substance of bodies.—All bodies are, in a greater or less degree, *conductors* of caloric. Metals and liquids are good conductors of heat, but silk, cotton, wool, wood, &c. are bad conductors of it. For example, if we put a short poker into the fire at one end, it will soon become hot at the other; but this will not happen with a piece of wood of the same length, and under the same circumstances. A person with a silken purse, containing metal coin, may stand so near the fire, as to make the metal almost too hot to touch, though the temperature of the purse will apparently be scarce altered. If a hand be put upon a hot body, part of the caloric leaves the hot body and enters the hand, producing the sensation of heat. On the contrary, if a hand be put on a cold body, as a piece of iron, or another cold hand, part of the caloric contained in the hand, leaves it to unite with the colder body, producing the sensation of cold. In short, caloric is diffused throughout all bodies, and enters into every operation in nature; and were it not for the influence of this subtile fluid, there is reason to believe, that the whole matter of the universe would be condensed into a solid mass.

Oxygen is a very pure, subtile, and elastic substance generally diffused throughout nature; but is never found unless in combination with other substances. It is one of the most important agents in nature; there being scarcely a single process, whether natural or artificial, in which oxygen has not some important share. When combined with caloric, it is called *oxygen gas*, which forms one of the constituent parts of the atmosphere. In this state, it forms the principle of *combustion;* producing the most rapid deflagration of all combustible substances. If a lighted taper be let down into a jar of oxygen gas, it burns with such splendor, that the eye can scarcely bear the glare of light; and, at the same time, produces a much greater heat than when burning in common air. If a steel wire, or a thin file, having a sharp point, armed with a bit of wood in inflammation, be introduced into a jar filled

with this gas, the steel will take fire, and its combustion will continue producing a most brilliant phenomenon. It has been proved, by numerous experiments, that this gas is so *essential* to combustion, that no substance will burn in common air, which has been previously deprived of its oxygen. It is also essential to the support of animal life; so that man, and all the inferior ranks of animated nature, may be said to depend upon this fluid for their existence. Its basis gives the *acid* character to all mineral and vegetable salts: and the *calcination* of metals is altogether effected by their union with oxygen. It constitutes the basis both of the atmosphere which surrounds the earth, and of the water which forms its rivers, seas, and oceans. It pervades the substance of all the vegetable tribes, and enables them to perform their functions; and, in combination with the different metals, serves the most important purposes in the useful arts. In the operation of this elementary principle, we perceive a striking display of the agency of the Creator, and of the admirable means which his wisdom has contrived for preserving, in due order, the system of nature. And, as this wonderful substance is so essentially necessary to animal and vegetable existence, every thing is so arranged as to produce a regular supply of it, notwithstanding its incessant changes, and the multifarious combinations into which it is continually entering.

One of the most extraordinary effects of oxygen appears, when it is combined in a certain proportion with nitrogen, so as to form the gaseous oxide of nitrogen, or what is commonly called *nitrous oxide*. This gas consists of 63 parts nitrogen, and 37 oxygen, by weight. When inhaled into the lungs, it produces an extraordinary elevation of the animal spirits, a propensity to leaping and running, involuntary fits of laughter, a rapid flow of vivid ideas, and a thousand delightful emotions; without being accompanied with any subsequent feelings of debility. This circumstance shows what a variety of delightful or pernicious effects might flow from the slightest change in the constitution of the atmosphere, were the hand of the Almighty to interpose in altering the proportion of its constituent parts: for atmospheric air is composed of 79 parts of nitrogen, and 21 of oxygen, which is not a very different proportion from the above. Another gas called *nitric* oxide, composed of 56 parts oxygen, and 44 nitrogen, produces instant suffocation in all animals that attempt to breathe it. One of the most corrosive acids, the *nitrous* acid, or aquafortis, is composed of 75 parts oxygen, and 25 parts nitrogen; so that we are every moment breathing a certain substance, which, in

another combination, would produce the most dreadful pain, and cause our immediate destruction. What a striking proof does this afford, of the infinite comprehension of the Divine mind, in foreseeing all the consequences of the elements of nature, and in directing their numerous combinations in such a manner as to promote the happiness of animated beings!

Nitrogen, or *azote*, is a substance generally diffused throughout nature, and particularly in animated bodies. It is not to be found in a solid or liquid state, but, combined with caloric, it forms *nitrogen gas*, which is one of the ingredients of the atmosphere. It is incapable of supporting either flame or animal life. This is proved by introducing an animal, or a burning candle, into a vessel full of this gas: in which case, the animal is suddenly suffocated, and the candle instantly extinguished. It is this gas which is expelled from the lungs at every respiration, and, rising over our heads, soon enters into new combinations. Though it is destructive to animal life, it appears to be favorable to plants, which vegetate freely when surrounded with nitrogen.

Hydrogen is another elementary substance, abundant in nature, and, when united to caloric, forms Hydrogen Gas. It is one of the constituent parts of *water*; for it has been completely demonstrated by experiment, that water is composed of 85 parts by weight of oxygen, and 15 of hydrogen, in every hundred parts of the fluid. This gas was formerly known by the name of *inflammable air*. It is distinguished among miners, by the name of *fire-damp*; it abounds in coal-mines, and sometimes produces the most tremendous explosions. It is incapable, by itself, of supporting combustion, and cannot be breathed without the most imminent danger. It is the chief constituent of oils, fats, spirits, ether, coals, and bitumen; and is supposed to be one of the agents which produce the *ignes fatui* and the *northern lights*. It is the *lightest* of all ponderable bodies; being from twelve to fifteen times lighter than common air. A hundred cubic inches of it weigh about $2\frac{1}{4}$ grains. On account of its great levity it is used for filling *air-balloons*. In contact with atmospheric air, it burns with a pale blue color. When mixed with oxygen gas, it may be exploded like gunpowder, with a violent report. *Carburetted hydrogen gas*, which is *carbon* dissolved in hydrogen, is that beautiful gas, which is now employed in lighting our streets, shops, and manufactories.

Carbon is another simple substance extensively diffused throughout nature. It is found pure and solid only in the *diamond*; but it may be procured in the state of *charcoal*, by

burning a piece of wood closely covered with sand, in a crucible. Carbon enters into the composition of bitumen and pit coal, and of most animal, and some mineral substances; and it forms nearly the whole of the solid basis of all vegetables, from the most delicate flower to the stately oak. It is also a component part of sugar, and of all kinds of wax, oils, gums, and resins. It combines with iron in various proportions, and the results are, cast iron and steel. Black lead is a composition of nine parts of carbon to one of iron; and is, therefore, called a *carburet* of iron. Carbon is *indestructible* by age, preserves its identity in all the combinations into which it enters.—*Carbonic acid gas* is a combination of carbon and oxygen. It is found in a state of combination with lime forming limestone, marble, and chalk; and may be separated from them by heat, or by means of the mineral acids. This gas, which was formerly called *fixed air*, is found in mines, caves, the bottoms of wells, wine cellars, brewers' vats, and in the neighborhood of lime-kilns. It is known to miners by the name of the *choke-damp*, and too frequently runs on deadly errands. It extinguishes flame and animal life. It is the heaviest of all the gases; being nearly twice the weight of common air, and twenty times the weight of hydrogen. It may, therefore, be poured from one vessel to another; and if a small quantity of it be poured upon a lighted taper, it will be instantly extinguished. It is a powerful *antiseptic*, or preserver from putrefaction. Meat which has been sealed up in it (says Mr. Parkes) has been known to have preserved its texture and appearance for more than 20 years. There is no substance of more importance in civilized life than the different forms of *Carbon*. "In nature," says Sir H. Davy, "this element is constantly active in an important series of operations. It is evolved in fermentation and combustion, in carbonic acid; it is separated from oxygen in the organs of plants; it is a principal element in animal structures; and is found in different forms in almost all the products of organized beings."

Sulphur is a substance which has been known from the earliest ages. It was used by the ancients in medicine, and its fumes have, for more than 2000 years, been employed in bleaching wool. It is found combined with many mineral substances, as arsenic, antimony, copper, and most of the metallic ores. It exists in many mineral waters, and in combination with vegetable and animal matters, but is most abundant in volcanic countries, particularly in the neighborhood of Vesuvius, Etna, and Hecla, in Iceland. It is a solid, opaque, combustible substance, of a pale yellow color, very brittle, and

almost without taste or smell. Its specific gravity is nearly twice that of water; it is a non-conductor of electricity, and, of course, becomes electric by friction. When heated to the temperature of 170° of Fahrenheit's thermometer, it rises up in the form of a fine powder, which is easily collected in a proper vessel and is named the *flowers of sulphur*. It is insoluble in water, but may be dissolved in oils, in spirit of wine, and in hydrogen gas. When sulphur is heated to the temperature of 302° in the open air, it takes fire spontaneously, and burns with a pale blue flame, and emits a great quantity of fumes of a strong suffocating odour. When heated to the temperature of 570°, it burns with a bright white flame, and emits a vast quantity of fumes. When these fumes are collected, they are found to consist entirely of *sulphuric acid;* so that sulphur, by combustion, is converted into an *acid*. It is the base of several compound substances. It unites with oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, phosphorus, the alkalies, the metals, and some of the earths. This substance is of great importance in medicine, as it is found to penetrate to the extremities of the most minute vessels, and to impregnate all the secretions. It is also used in the arts, particularly in bleaching and dying; it forms a very large proportion of gun-powder; and one of its most common, but not least useful properties, is that of its *combustibility*, by which, with the help of a tinder-box, light is almost instantaneously produced. As this substance has not yet been decomposed, it is considered by chemists, in the mean time, as one of the simple substances.

Phosphorus is another simple combustible substance, but is never found in a pure state in nature. It is commonly united to oxygen in a state of phosphoric acid, which is found in different animal, vegetable, and mineral substances. It was first discovered by Brandt, a chemist of Hamburgh, in the year 1667, and afterwards by the Honorable Mr. Boyle, in 1679. It was formerly obtained by a disgusting process; but it is now extracted from the *bones* of animals, by burning them, and then reducing them to a fine powder, and afterwards pouring sulphuric acid upon them. This substance, when pure, resembles bees' wax, being of a clear, transparent, yellowish color; it is insoluble in water; it may be cut with a knife, or twisted to pieces with the fingers; and it is about double the specific gravity of water. Its most remarkable property is its very strong attraction for oxygen, from which circumstance, it burns spontaneously in the open air at the temperature of 43°; that is, it attracts the oxygen gas from the atmosphere, and heat and flame are produced. It gradually consumes

when exposed to the common temperature of air, emits a whitish smoke, and is luminous in the dark; for this reason it is kept in phials of water; and as the heat of the hand is sufficient to inflame it, it should seldom be handled except under water. At the temperature of 99° it melts; it evaporates at 219°, and boils at 554°. When heated to 148° it takes fire, and burns with a very bright flame, and gives out a very large quantity of white smoke, which is luminous in the dark; at the same time it emits an odor, which has some resemblance to that of garlic; and this smoke, when collected, is proved to be an *acid*. It burns with the greatest splendor in oxygen gas, and when taken internally, it is found to be poisonous. If any light substance, capable of conducting heat, be placed upon the surface of boiling water, and a bit of phosphorus be laid upon it, the heat of the water will be sufficient to set the phosphorus on fire. If we write a few words on paper with a bit of phosphorus fixed in a quill, when the writing is carried into a dark room it will appear beautifully luminous. If a piece of phosphorus, about the size of a pea, be dropped into a tumbler of hot water, and a stream of oxygen gas forced directly upon it, it will display the most brilliant combustion under water that can be imagined. All experiments with phosphorus. however, require to be performed with *great caution*. This substance is used in making phosphoric match-bottles, phosphoric oil, phosphoric tapers, and various phosphoric fireworks. *Phosphorized hydrogen* gas is produced by bits of phophorus remaining some hours in hydrogen gas. It is supposed to be this gas which is often seen hovering on the surface of burial grounds and marshes, known in Scotland by the name of *spunkie*, and in England by that of *will-o-the-wisp*.

Some animals, as the *glow-worm* and the *fire-fly*, and fish in a putrescent state, exhibit phosphorescent qualities. M. Peron describes a singular instance of this kind in an animal which he calls the *pyrosoma atlanticum*, which he observed in his voyage from Europe to the Isle of France. The darkness was intense when it was first discovered; and all at once, there appeared at some distance, as it were a vast sheet of phosphorus floating on the waves, which occupied a great space before the vessel. When the vessel had passed through this inflamed part of the sea, it was found, that this prodigious light was occasioned by an immense number of small animals, which swam at different depths, and appeared to assume various forms. Those which were deepest looked like great red hot cannon balls, while those on the surface resembled cylinders of red hot iron. Some of them were caught, and were

found to vary in size from 3 to 7 inches. All the exterior surface of the animal was bristled with thick long tubercles, shining like so many diamonds ; and these seemed to be the principal seat of its wonderful phosphorescence.

Such is a brief description of the principal elementary substances, which, in a thousand diversified forms, pervade the system of nature, and produce all that variety which we behold in the atmosphere, the waters, the earth, and the various processes of the arts. It is probable that some of these sub stances are compounds, though they have not yet been decomposed. Yea, it is possible, and not at all improbable, that there are but two, or at most three elementary sub stances in nature, the various modifications of which produce all the beauties and sublimities in the universe. Perhaps caloric, oxygen, and hydrogen, may ultimately be found to constitute all the elementary principles of nature.—Without prosecuting this subject farther, I shall conclude this article with a few cursory reflections, tending to illustrate its connexion with religion.

The remarks which I have already thrown out in reference to Natural Philosophy, will equally apply to the science of Chemistry ; and, therefore, do not require to be repeated. In addition to these, the following observations may be stated :—

1. This science displays, in a striking point of view, the wisdom and goodness of God, *in producing, by the most simple means, the most astonishing and benevolent effects.* All the varied phenomena we perceive, throughout the whole system of sublunary nature, are produced by a combination of six or seven simple substances. I formerly adverted to the infinite variety which exists in the vegetable kingdom, (see pp. 78—79.) About fifty-six thousand different species of plants have already been discovered by botanists. All these, from the humble shrub to the cedar of Lebanon, which adorn the surface of the globe, in every clime, with such a diversity of forms, shades, and colors, are the result of the combinations of "four or five natural substances—caloric, light, water, air, and carbon." "When we consider," says Mr. Parkes, "that the many thousand tribes of vegetables are not only all formed from a few simple substances, but that they all enjoy the same sun, vegetate in the same medium, and are supplied with the same nutriment, we cannot but be struck with the rich economy of Nature, and are almost induced to doubt the evidence of those senses with which the God of nature has furnished us. That it should be possible so to modify and intermingle a few simple substances, and thence produce all the variety of form.

color, odor, &c. which are observable in the different families of vegetables, is a phenomenon too astonishing for our comprehension. Nothing short of Omnipotence could have provided such a paradise for man."—*Chemical Catechism* chap. 9.

> "Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
> In mingled clouds to Him, whose sun exalts,
> Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints."
>
> THOMSON.

What an admirable view is here opened up of the economy of Divine wisdom, and of the beneficent care which has been taken to secure the comfort and happiness of every living creature: and how ungrateful a disposition must it indicate in rational beings to overlook such benevolent arrangements! It is highly probable, that in all other worlds dispersed throughout the universe, an infinite diversity of scenery exists, and that no one globe or system exactly resembles another; and yet, it is probable, that the primary elements of matter, or the few *simple substances* of which our world is composed, may be of the same nature as those which form the constituent parts of every other system; and may give birth to all the variety which exists throughout the wide extent of creation, and to all the changes and revolutions through which the different systems may pass, during every period of infinite duration.

2. From this science we have every reason to conclude, that matter is indestructible. In the various changes that take place in material substances, the particles of matter are not destroyed, but only assume new forms, and enter into new combinations. When a piece of wood, for example, is burned to ashes, none of its principles are destroyed; the elementary substances of which it was composed, are only separated from one another, and formed into new compounds. Carbon, as already stated, appears to be indestructible by age, and to preserve its essential properties, in every mode of its existence. That Being, indeed, who created matter at first, may reduce it to nothing when he pleases; but it is highly improbable that his power will ever be interposed to produce this effect; or that any particle of matter which now exists, will ever be annihilated, into whatever new or varied combinations it may enter. When any particular world, or assemblage of material existence, has remained in its original state for a certain period of duration, and accomplished all the ends it was intended to subserve, in that state, the materials of which it is composed, will, in all probability, be employed for erecting a new system and establishing a new series of events, in which new scenes

and new beauties and sublimities will arise from new and varied combinations. For the Creator does nothing in vain. But to annihilate, and again to create, would be operating in vain; and we uniformly find, that in all the arrangements of Deity, in the present state of things, Nature is frugal and economical in all her proceedings; so that there is no process, when thoroughly investigated, that appears unnecessary or superfluous.

From the fact, that matter appears to be indestructible, we may learn, that the Creator may, with the self-same materials which now exist around us, new-model and arrange the globe we inhabit, after the general conflagration, so as to make a more glorious world to arise out of its ashes; purified from those physical evils which now exist; and fitted for the accommodation either of renovated men, or of other pure intelligences. From the same fact, combined with the consideration of the infinite diversity of effects which the simple substances of nature are capable of producing, we may be enabled to form a conception of the ease with which the Creator may new-model our bodies, after they have been dissolved in the dust; and how, from the same original atoms, he may construct and adorn them with more glorious forms, and more delightful and exquisite senses than they now possess.

In short, the rapid progress which chemical science is now making, promises, ere long, to introduce improvements among the human race, which will expand their views of the agency of God, counteract many physical evils, and promote, to an extent which has never yet been experienced, their social and domestic enjoyment. The late discoveries of Chemistry tend to convince us, that the properties and powers of natural substances are only beginning to be discovered. Who could have imagined, a century ago, that an invisible substance is contained in a piece of coal, capable of producing the most beautiful and splendid illumination—that this substance may be conveyed, in a few moments, through pipes of several miles in length—and that a city, containing several hundred thousands of inhabitants, may be instantly lighted up by it, without the aid of either wax, oil, or tallow? Who could have imagined, that one of the ingredients of the air we breathe is the principle of combustion—that a rod of iron may be made to burn in it with a brilliancy that dazzles the eyes—that a piece of charcoal may be made to burn with a white and splendid light, which is inferior only to the solar rays—and that the *diamond* is nothing more than *carbon* in a crystallized state, and differs only in a slight degree from a bit of common charcoal?

Who could have surmised, that a substance would be discovered, of such a degree of levity, as would have power sufficient to buoy up a number of men to the upper parts of the atmosphere, and enable them to swim, in safety, above the regions of the clouds? These are only specimens of still more brilliant discoveries which will, doubtless, be brought to light by the researches of future generations. We have reason to believe, that the investigations of this science will, in due time, enable us to counteract most of the diseases incident to the human frame; and to prevent many of those fatal accidents to which mankind are now exposed. DAVY's *safety lamp* has already preserved many individuals from destruction, when working in coal mines; and thousands, in after ages, will be indebted to this discovery, for security from the dreadful explosions of hydrogen gas. And, we trust, that the period is not far distant, when specific antidotes to the diseases peculiar to the different trades and occupations in which mankind are employed will be discovered; and the health and vigour of the mass of society be preserved unimpaired, amidst all the processes in which they may be engaged.—In fine, the rapid progress of chemical discovery carries forward our views to a period, when man, having thoroughly explored the powers of nature, and subjected them, in some measure, to his control, will be enabled to ward off most of those physical evils with which he is now annoyed, and to raise himself, in some degree, to the dignity and happiness he enjoyed before moral evil had shed its baleful influence on our terrestrial system. Such a period corresponds to many of the descriptions contained in the Sacred Oracles of the millennial state of the church; when social, domestic, moral, and intellectual improvement shall be carried to the utmost perfection which our sublunary station will permit; when wars shall cease; when the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth; when every man shall sit under his vine and fig-tree, without being exposed to the least alarm; and when there shall be nothing to hurt nor destroy throughout the church of the living God. And, therefore, we ought to consider the various discoveries and improvements now going forward in this, and other departments of science as preparing the way for the introduction of this long-expected and auspicious era.

ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY.

The general object of both these sciences is to investigate and describe the structure and economy of the animal frame. *Anatomy* dissects *dead* bodies, *Physiology* investigates the

functions of those that are *living*. The former examines the fluids, muscles, viscera, and all the other parts of the human body, in a state of *rest*; the latter considers them in a state of *action*.

The parts of the human body have been distinguished into two different kinds—solids and fluids. The solid parts are *bones*, *cartilages*, *ligaments*, *muscles*, *tendons*, *membranes*, *nerves*, *arteries*, *veins*, *hair*, *nails*, and *ducts*, or fine tubular vessels of various kinds. Of these solid parts, the following compound organs consist; the *brain* and *cerebellum*; the *lungs*; the *heart*; the *stomach*; the *liver*; the *spleen*; the *pancreas*; the *glands*; the *kidneys*; the *intestines*; the *mesentery*; the *larynx*; and the organs of sense—the *eyes*, *ears*, *nose*, and *tongue*. The fluid parts are, the *saliva*, or spittle, *phlegm*, *serum*, the *chyle*, *blood*, *bile*, *milk*, *lympha*, *urine*, the *pancreatic juice*, and the *aqueous humour* of the eyes. The human body is divided into three great cavities—the *head*; the *thorax*, or breast; and the *abdomen*, or belly. The *head* is formed of the bones of the cranium, and encloses the brain and cerebellum. The *thorax* is composed of the vertebræ of the back, the sternum, and true ribs; and contains the *heart*, the *pericardium*, the *breast*, and the *lungs*. The *abdomen* is separated from the thorax by means of the *diaphragm*, which is a fleshy and membranous substance, composed, for the most part, of muscular fibres. This cavity is formed by the lumbar vertebræ, the os sacrum, the ossa innominata, the false ribs, the peritonæum, and a variety of muscles. It encloses the stomach, intestines, omentum, or caul, the liver, pancreas, spleen kidneys, and urinary bladder.—Without attempting any technical description of these different parts, which could convey no accurate ideas to a general reader, I shall merely state two or three facts in relation to the system of bones, muscles, and blood-vessels, as *specimens* of the wonderful structure of our bodily frame.

The Bones may be regarded as the prop-work or basis on which the human body is constructed. They bear the same relation to the animal system, as the wood-work to a building. They give shape and firmness to the body; they support its various parts, and prevent it from sinking by its own weight; they serve as levers for the muscles to act upon, and to defend the brain, the heart, the lungs, and other vital parts from external injury. Of the bones, some are *hollow*, and filled with marrow; others are *solid* throughout; some are very *small*; others very *large*; some are round, and others *flat*; some are *plane*, and others *convex* or *concave*;—and all these several forms are requisite

for the situations they occupy, and the respective functions they have to perform.—The *spine*, or back-bone, consists of 24 vertebræ, or small bones, connected together by cartilages, articulations, and ligaments; of which 7 belong to the neck, 12 to the back, and 5 to the loins. In the centre of each vertebra there is a hole for the lodgment and continuation of the spinal marrow, which extends from the brain to the rump.—From these vertebræ the arched bones called *ribs* proceed; and seven of them join the breast-bone on each side, where they terminate in cartilages, and form the cavity of the thorax or chest. The five lower ribs, with a number of muscles, form the cavity of the abdomen, as above stated. The spine is one of the most admirable mechanical contrivances in the human frame. Had it consisted of only three or four bones, or had the holes in each bone, not exactly corresponded, and fitted into each other, the spinal marrow would have been bruised, and life endangered at every bending of the body.—The skull is composed of 10 bones, and about 51 are reckoned to belong to the face, the orbits of the eyes, and the jaws in which the teeth are fixed. There are seldom more than 16 teeth in each jaw, or 32 in all.—The number of bones in a human body is generally estimated at about 245; of which there are reckoned, in the skull, head, and face, 61; in the trunk, 64; in the arms, and hands, 60; in the legs, and feet, 60. The bones are provided with *ligaments* or hinges, which bind and fasten them together, and prevent them from being displaced by any violent motion; and, that the ligaments may work smoothly into one another, the joints are separated by *cartilages* or gristles, and provided with a gland for the secretion of oil or *mucus*, which is constantly exuding into the joints; so that every requisite is provided by our Benevolent Creator, to prevent pain, and to promote facility of motion. "In considering the joints," says Dr. Paley, "there is nothing, perhaps, which ought to move our gratitude more than the reflection, *how well they wear*. A limb shall swing upon its hinge, or play in its socket many hundred times in an hour, for 60 years together, without diminution of agility; which is a long time for any thing to last; for any thing so much worked as the joints are."

The Muscular System.—A *muscle* is a bundle of fleshy, and sometimes of tendinous fibres. The fleshy fibres compose the body of the muscle; and the tendinous fibres the extremities. Some muscles are long and round; some plain and circular; some are *spiral*, and some have *straight* fibres. Some are double, having a tendon running through the body

from head to tail ; some have two or more tendinous branches running through, with various rows and orders of fibres. All these, and several other varieties, are essentially requisite for the respective offices they have to perform in the animal system. The muscles constitute the fleshy part of the human body, and give it that varied and beautiful form we observe over all its surface. But their principal design is to serve as *the organs of motion*. They are inserted, by strong tendinous extremities, into the different bones of which the skeleton is composed ; and, by their contraction and distention, give rise to all the movements of the body. The muscles, therefore, may be considered as so many cords attached to the bones ; and the Author of Nature has fixed them according to the most perfect principles of mechanism, so as to produce the fittest motions in the parts for the movement of which they are intended.

One of the most wonderful properties of the muscles is, the *extraordinary force they exert*, although they are composed of such slender threads or fibres. The following facts, in relation to this point, are demonstrated by the celebrated *Borelli*, in his work, "*De Motu Animalium.*" When a man lifts up with his teeth a weight of 200 pounds, with a rope fastened to the jaw-teeth, the muscles named *Temporalis* and *Masseter*, with which people chew, and which perform this work, exert a force of above 15,000lbs. weight. If any one hanging his arm directly downwards lifts a weight of 20 pounds, with the third or last joint of his thumb, the muscle which bend the thumb and bears that weight, exerts a force of about *three thousand pounds*. When a man standing upon his feet, leaps or springs upwards to the height of two feet, if the weight of such a man be 150 pounds, the muscles employed in that action will exert a force 2000 times greater ; that is to say, a force of about *three hundred thousand pounds*. The *heart*, at each pulse or contraction, by which it protrudes the blood out of the arteries into the veins, exerts a force of above *a hundred thousand pounds*. Who can contemplate this amazing strength of the muscular system, without admiration of the power and wisdom of the Creator, who has thus endued a bundle of threads, each of them smaller than a hair, with such an astonishing degree of mechanical force ! There have been reckoned about 446 muscles in the human body, which have been dissected and distinctly described ; every one of which is essential to the performance of some one motion or other, which contributes to our ease and enjoyment; and, in most instances, a great number of them is required to perform their different functions

at the same time. It has been calculated, that about *a hundred muscles* are employed every time we breathe.—"Breathing with ease," says Dr. Paley, "is a blessing of every moment; yet, of all others, it is that which we possess with the least consciousness. A man in an asthma is the only man who knows how to estimate it."

THE HEART AND BLOOD-VESSELS.—The heart is a hollow muscular organ, of a conical shape, and consists of four distinct cavities. The two largest are called *ventricles*, and the two smallest, *auricles*. The ventricles *send out* the blood to the arteries; the auricles *receive* it from the veins. The heart is enclosed in the *pericardium*, a membranous bag, which contains a quantity of water, or lymph. This water lubricates the heart, and facilitates all its motions. The heart is the general reservoir of the blood. When the heart contracts, the blood is propelled from the *right ventricle* into the lungs, through the pulmonary arteries, which, like all the other arteries, are furnished with *valves* that play easily forward, but admit not the blood to return toward the heart. The blood, after circulating through the lungs, and having there been revivified by coming in contact with the air, and imbibing a portion of its oxygen, returns into the *left auricle* of the heart, by the pulmonary vein. At the same instant, the *left ventricle* drives the blood into the *aorta*, a large artery which sends off branches to supply the head and arms. Another large branch of the aorta descends along the inside of the back-bone, and detaches numerous ramifications to nourish the bowels, and inferior extremities. After serving the most remote extremities of the body, the arteries are converted into *veins*, which, in their return to the heart, gradually unite into larger branches, till the whole terminate in one great trunk, called the *vena cava*, which discharges itself into the *right auricle* of the heart, and completes the circulation. Each ventricle of the heart is reckoned to contain about one ounce, or two tablespoonsfull of blood. The heart contracts 4000 times every hour; and, consequently, there passes through it 250 pounds of blood in one hour. And if the mass of blood in a human body be reckoned at an average of twenty-five pounds, it will follow that *the whole mass of blood passes through the heart*, and, consequently, through the thousands of ramifications of the veins and arteries *fourteen times every hour*, or, about once every four minutes. We may acquire a rude idea of the force with which the blood is impelled from the heart, by considering the velocity with which water issues from a syringe, or from the pipe of a fire-engine. Could we behold these rapid

motions incessantly going on within us, it would overpower our minds with astonishment, and even with terror. We should be apt to feel alarmed on making the smallest exertion, lest the parts of this delicate machine should be broken or deranged, and its functions interrupted. The arteries, into which the blood is forced, branch in every direction through the body, like the roots and branches of a tree; running through the substance of the bones, and every part of the animal frame, till they are lost in such fine tubes as to be wholly invisible. In the parts where the arteries are lost to the sight, the veins take their rise; and in their commencement, are also imperceptible.

Respiration.—The organs of respiration are the *lungs*. They are divided into five lobes; three of which lie on the right, and two on the left side of the thorax. The substance of the lungs is chiefly composed of infinite ramifications of the thrachea, or windpipe, which, after gradually becoming more and more minute, terminate in little cells, or vesicles, which have a free communication with one another. At each inspiration, these pipes and cells are filled with air, which is again discharged by expiration. In this manner, a circulation of air, which is necessary to the existence of men and other animals, is constantly kept up as long as life remains. The air cells of the lungs open into the windpipe, by which they communicate with the external atmosphere. The whole internal structure of the lungs is lined by a transparent membrane, estimated at only the thousandth part of an inch in thickness; but whose surface, from its various convolutions, measures fifteen square feet, which is equal to the external surface of the body. On this thin and extensive membrane, innumerable veins and arteries are distributed, some of them finer than hairs; and through these vessels all the blood of the system is successively propelled, by a most curious and admirable mechanism. It has been computed, that the lungs, on an average, contain about 280 cubic inches, or about five English quarts of air. At each inspiration, about forty cubic inches of air are received into the lungs, and the same quantity discharged at each expiration. On the supposition, that 20 respirations take place in a minute, it will follow, that, in one minute, we inhale 800 cubic inches; in an hour 48,000; and in a day, one million, one hundred and fifty-two thousand cubic inches—a quantity which would fill seventy-seven wine hogsheads, and would weigh fifty-three pounds troy. By means of this function, a vast body of air is daily brought into contact with the mass of blood, and com-

municates to it its vivifying influence; and, therefore, it is of the utmost importance to health, that the air, of which we breathe so considerable a quantity, should be pure, and uncontaminated with noxious effluvia.

Digestion.—This process is performed by the *stomach*, which is a membranous and muscular bag, furnished with two orifices. By the one, it has a communication with the gullet, and by the other, with the bowels. The food, after being moistened by the saliva, is received into the stomach, where it is still farther diluted by the *gastric juice*, which has the power of dissolving every kind of animal and vegetable substance. Part of it is afterwards absorbed by the *lymphatic* and *lacteal* vessels, and carried into the circulating system, and converted into blood for supplying that nourishment which the perpetual waste of our bodies demands.

Perspiration is the evacuation of the juices of the body through the pores of the skin. It has been calculated that there are above *three hundred thousand millions of pores* in the glands of the skin which covers the body of a middle sized man. Through these pores, more than one-half of what we eat and drink passes off by *insensible* perspiration. If we consume eight pounds of food in a day, five pounds of it are insensibly discharged by perspiration. During a night of seven hours' sleep, we perspire about forty ounces, or two pounds and a half. At an average, we may estimate the discharge from the surface of the body, by sensible and insensible perspiration, at from half an ounce to four ounces an hour. This is a most wonderful part of the animal economy, and is absolutely necessary to our health, and even to our very existence. When *partially* obstructed, colds, rheumatisms, fevers, and other inflammatory disorders, are produced; and were it completely obstructed, the vital functions would be clogged and impeded in their movements, and death would inevitably ensue.

Sensation.—The *nerves* are generally considered as the instruments of sensation. They are soft white cords which proceed from the brain and spinal marrow. They come forth originally by pairs. Ten pair proceed from the medullary substance of the brain, which are distributed to all parts of the head and neck. Thirty pair proceed from the spinal marrow, through the vertebræ, to all the other parts of the body; being forty in all. These nerves, the ramifications of which are infinitely various and minute, are distributed upon the heart, lungs, blood-vessels, bowels, and muscles, till they terminate on the skin or external covering of the body. Impressions of

external objects are received by the brain from the adjacent organs of sense, and the brain exercises its commands over the muscles and limbs by means of the nerves.

Without prosecuting these imperfect descriptions farther, I shall conclude this very hasty sketch with the following summary of the parts of the body, in the words of Bonnet.—"The *bones*, by their joints and solidity, form the foundation of this fine machine: the *ligaments* are strings which unite the parts together: the *muscles* are fleshy substances, which act as elastic springs to put them in motion: the *nerves*, which are dispersed over the whole body, connect all the parts together: the *arteries* and *veins*, like rivulets, convey life and health throughout: the *heart*, placed in the centre, is the focus where the blood collects, or the acting power by means of which it circulates and is preserved: the *lungs*, by means of another power, draw in the external air, and expel hurtful vapors: the *stomach* and *intestines* are the magazines where every thing that is required for the daily supply is prepared: the *brain*, that seat of the soul, is formed in a manner suitable to the dignity of its inhabitant: the *senses*, which are the soul's ministers, warn it of all that is necessary either for its pleasure or use.* Adorable Creator! with what wonderful art hast thou formed us! Though the heavens did not exist to proclaim thy glory; though there were no created being upon earth but myself, my own body might suffice to convince me that thou art a God of unlimited power and infinite goodness."

This subject suggests a variety of moral and religious reflections, but the limits to which I am confined, will permit me to state only the following:—

1. The economy of the human frame, when seriously contemplated, has a tendency to excite admiration and astonishment, and to *impress us with a sense of our continual dependence on a Superior Power.* What an immense multiplicity of machinery must be in action to enable us to breathe, to feel, and to walk! Hundreds of bones of diversified forms, connected together by various modes of articulation; hundreds of muscles to produce motion, each of them acting in at least ten different capacities; (see p. 83.) hundreds of tendons and ligaments to connect the bones and muscles; hundreds of arteries to convey the blood to the remotest part of the system; hundreds of veins to bring it back to its reservoir the heart; thousands of glands secreting humors of various kinds from the blood; thousands of lacteal and lymphatic tubes,

* Contemplation of Nature, vol. I. p. 64.

absorbing and conveying nutriment to the circulating fluid; millions of pores, through which the perspiration is continually issuing; an infinity of ramifications of nerves, diffusing sensation throughout all the parts of this exquisite machine; and the heart at every pulsation exerting a force of a hundred thousand pounds, in order to preserve all this complicated machinery in constant operation! The whole of this vast system of mechanism must be in action before we can walk across our apartments! We admire the operation of a steam-engine, and the force it exerts. But, though it is constructed of the hardest materials which the mines can supply, in a few months some of its essential parts are worn and deranged, even although its action should be frequently discontinued. But the animal machine, though constructed, for the most part, of the softest and most flabby substances, can go on without intermission in all its diversified movements, by night and by day, for the space of eighty or a hundred years; the heart giving ninety-six thousand strokes every twenty-four hours, and the whole mass of blood rushing through a thousand pipes of all sizes every four minutes! And, is it *man* that governs these nice and complicated movements? Did *he* set the heart in motion, or endue it with the muscular force it exerts? And when it has ceased to beat, can *he* command it again to resume its functions? Man knows neither the secret springs of the machinery within him, nor the half of the purposes for which they serve, or of the movements they perform. Can anything more strikingly demonstrate our dependance every moment on a Superior Agent, and that it is "*in God* we live and move, and have our being?" Were a single pin of the machinery within us, and over which we have no control, either broken or deranged, a thousand movements might instantly be interrupted, and our bodies left to crumble into the dust.

It was considerations of this kind that led the celebrated physician Galen, who was a sceptic in his youth, publicly to acknowledge that a Supreme Intelligence must have operated in ordaining the laws by which living beings are constructed. And he wrote his excellent treatise "On the uses of the parts of the human frame," as a solemn hymn to the Creator of the world. "I first endeavor from His works," he says, "to know him myself, and afterwards, by the same means, to show him to others; to inform them, how great is his wisdom, his goodness, his power." The late Dr. Hunter has observed, that Astronomy and Anatomy are the studies which present us with the most striking view of the two most wonderful attributes of the Supreme Being. The first of these fills the mind with the

idea of his immensity in the largeness, distances, and number of the heavenly bodies; the last astonishes us with his intelligence and art in the variety and delicacy of animal mechanism.

2. The study of the animal economy has a powerful tendency *to excite emotions of gratitude.* Man is naturally a thoughtless and *ungrateful* creature. These dispositions are partly owing to *ignorance* of the wonders of the human frame, and of the admirable economy of the visible world; and this ignorance is owing to the want of those specific instructions which ought to be communicated by parents and teachers, in connexion with religion. For, there is no rational being who is acquainted with the structure of his animal system, and reflects upon it with the least degree of attention, but must feel a sentiment of admiration and gratitude. The science which unfolds to us the economy of our bodies, shows us, on what an infinity of springs, and motions, and adaptations, our life and comfort depend. And when we consider, that all these movements are performed without the least care or laborious effort on our part, if we be not altogether brutish, and insensible of our dependance on a superior Power, we must be filled with emotions of gratitude towards Him "whose hands have made and fashioned us, and who giveth us life, and breath, and all things." Some of the motions to which I have adverted, depend upon our will; and with what celerity do they obey its commands? Before we can rise from our chair and walk across our apartment, a hundred muscles must be set in motion; every one of these must be relaxed or constricted, just to a certain degree, and no more; and all must act harmoniously at the same instant of time; and, at the command of the soul, all these movements are instantaneously performed. When I wish to lift my hand to my head, every part of the body requisite to produce the effect is put in motion: the nerves are braced, the muscles are stretched or relaxed, the bones play in their sockets, and the whole animal machine concurs in the action, as if every nerve and muscle had heard a sovereign and resistless call. When I wish the next moment to extend my hand to my foot, all these muscles are thrown into a different state, and a new set are brought along with them into action: and thus we may vary, every moment, the movements of the muscular system, and the mechanical actions it produces, by a simple change in our volition. Were we not daily accustomed to such varied and voluntary movements, or could we contemplate them in any other machine, we should be lost in wonder and astonishment.

Besides these voluntary motions, there are a thousand important functions which have no dependance upon our will. Whether we think of it or not, whether we be sleeping or waking, sitting or walking—the heart is incessantly exerting its muscular power at the centre of the system, and sending off streams of blood through hundreds of pipes; the lungs are continually expanding and contracting their thousand vesicles and imbibing the vital principle of the air; the stomach is grinding the food; the lacteals and lymphatics are extracting nourishment for the blood; the liver and kidneys drawing off their secretions; and the perspiration issuing from millions of pores. These, and many other important functions with which we are unacquainted, and over which we have no control, ought to be regarded as the immediate agency of the Deity within us, and should excite our incessant admiration and praise.

There is one peculiarity in the constitution of our animal system, which we are apt to overlook, and for which we are never sufficiently grateful; and that is, *the power it possesses of self-restoration.* A wound heals up of itself: a broken bone is made firm again by a callus; and a dead part is separated and thrown off. If all the wounds we have ever received were still open and bleeding afresh, to what a miserable condition should we be reduced? But by a system of internal powers, beyond all human comprehension, as to the mode of their operation, such dismal effects are effectually prevented. In short, when we consider, that health depends upon such a numerous assemblage of moving organs, and, that a single spring out of action, might derange the whole machine, and put a stop to all its complicated movements, can we refrain from joining with the Psalmist, in his pious exclamation, and grateful resolution, "How precious are thy wonderful contrivances concerning me, O God! how great is the sum of them! I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

Omitting the consideration of several other departments of science, I shall in the meantime, notice only another subject connected with religion, and that is History.

HISTORY.

History embraces a record and description of past facts and events, in reference to all the nations and ages of the world, in so far as they are known, and have been transmitted to our time. As Natural History contains a record of the operations

of the Creator in the material world, so, sacred and civil history embraces a record of his transactions in the moral and intellectual world, or, in other words, a detail of the plans and operations of His Providence, in relation to the inhabitants of our globe. Through the medium of Sacred History, we learn the period and the manner of man's creation—the reason of his fall from the primitive state of integrity in which he was created, and the dismal consequences which ensued;—the various movements of Providence in order to his recovery, and the means by which human Redemption was achieved;—the manner in which the Gospel was at first promulgated, the countries into which it was carried, and the important effects it produced. Through the medium of Civil History we learn the deep and universal depravity of mankind, as exhibited in the wars, dissensions, and ravages, which have desolated our fallen race, in every period, and in every land;—we learn the desperate wickedness of the human heart, in the more private acts of ferocity, cruelty, and injustice, which, in all ages, men have perpetrated upon each other;—we behold the Righteousness of the Supreme Ruler of the world, and the equity of his administration, in the judgments which have been inflicted on wicked nations—and the improbability, nay, the *impossibility* of men being ever restored to moral order and happiness, without a more extensive diffusion of the blessings of the Gospel of Peace, and a more cordial acquiescence in the requirements of the Divine laws.

Such being some of the benefits to be derived from History, it requires no additional arguments to show, that this branch of knowledge should occasionally form a subject of study to every intelligent Christian. But in order to render the study of History subservient to the interests of Religion, it is not enough merely to gratify our curiosity and imagination, by following out a succession of memorable events, by tracing the progress of armies and of battles, and listening to the groans of the vanquished, and the shouts of conquerors. This would be to study History merely as sceptics, as Atheists, or as writers of novels. When we contemplate the facts which the Historian presents to our view, we ought to raise our eyes to Him who is the Governor among the nations, "who doth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth," and who overrules the jarring interests of mortals, for promoting the prosperity of that Kingdom which shall never be moved. We should view the immoral propensities and dispositions of mankind as portrayed in the page of history, as evidences of the depravity of

our species, and as excitements to propagate, with unremitting energy, the knowledge of that Religion, whose sublime doctrines and pure precepts alone can counteract the stream of human corruption, and unite all nations in one harmonious society. We should view the contests of nations, and the results with which they are accompanied, as guided by that Invisible Hand, which "mustereth the armies to the battle;" and should contemplate them either as the accomplishment of Divine predictions, as the inflictions of retributive justice, as paving the way for the introduction of rational liberty and social happiness among men, or as ushering in that glorious period, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth," and the nations shall learn war no more.

Thus I have taken a very cursory survey of some of those sciences which stand in a near relation to the objects of Religion; and which may, indeed, be considered as forming so many of its subordinate branches. There are many other departments of knowledge which, at first view, do not seem to have any relation to Theological science; and yet, on a closer inspection, will be found to be essentially connected with the several subjects of which I have been treating. For example —some may be apt to imagine that Arithmetic, Geometry, Trigonometry, and other branches of Mathematics, can have no relation to the leading objects of Religion. But if these sciences had never been cultivated, the most important discoveries of astronomy, geography, natural philosophy, and chemistry, would never have been made; ships could not have been navigated across the ocean; distant continents, and the numerous "isles of the sea," would have remained unexplored, and their inhabitants left to grope in the darkness of heathenism; and most of those instruments and engines by which the condition of the human race will be gradually meliorated, and the influence of Christianity extended, would never have been invented. Such is the dependance of every branch of useful knowledge upon another, that were any one portion of science, which has a practical tendency, to be discarded, it would prevent, to a certain degree, the improvement of every other. And, consequently, if any one science can be shown to have a connexion with religion, all the rest must likewise stand in a certain relation to it. It must, therefore, have a pernicious effect on the minds of the mass of the Christian world, when preachers, in their sermons, endeavor to undervalue scientific

knowledge, by attempting to contrast it with the doctrines of Revelation. It would be just as reasonable to attempt to contrast the several doctrines, duties, and facts, recorded in the New Testament with each other, in order to determine their relative importance, and to show which of them might be altogether overlooked and discarded. The series of facts and of Divine revelations comprised in the Bible; the moral and political events which diversify the history of nations; and the physical operations that are going on among the rolling worlds on high, and in the chemical changes of the invisible atoms of matter, are all parts of *one* comprehensive system, under the direction of the Eternal Mind; every portion of which must have a certain relation to the whole.

And, therefore, instead of attempting to degrade one part of the Divine fabric in order to enhance another, our duty is to take an expansive view of the whole, and to consider the symmetry and proportion of its parts, and their mutual bearings and relations—in so far as our opportunities, and the limited faculties of our minds will permit.

If the remarks which have been thrown out in this chapter, respecting the connexion of the Sciences with Religion, have any foundation, it will follow—that Sermons, Lectures, Systems of Divinity, and Religious Periodical works, should embrace occasional illustrations of such subjects, for the purpose of expanding the conceptions of professed Christians, and of enabling them to take large and comprehensive views of the perfection and the providence of the Almighty. It is much to be regretted, that so many members of the Christian Church are absolute strangers to such studies and contemplations; while the time and attention that might have been devoted to such exercises, have, in many cases, been usurped by the most grovelling affections, by foolish pursuits, by gossiping chit-chat, and slanderous conversation. Shall the most trifling and absurd opinions of ancient and modern heretics be judged worthy of attention, and occupy a place in Religious journals, and even in discussions from the pulpit, and shall "the mighty acts of the Lord," and the visible wonders of his power and wisdom, be thrown completely into the shade? To survey, with an eye of intelligence, the wide-extended theatre of the Divine operations—to mark the agency of the Eternal Mind in every object we behold, and in every movement within us and around us, are some of the noblest attainments of the rational soul; and, in conjunction with every other Christian study and acquirement, are calculated to make "the man of God perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

By such studies, we are, in some measure, assimilated to the angelic tribes, whose powers of intellect are for ever employed in such investigations—and are gradually prepared for bearing a part in their immortal hymn—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints. Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

CHAPTER III.

THE RELATION WHICH THE INVENTIONS OF HUMAN ART BEAR TO THE OBJECTS OF RELIGION.

In this chapter, I shall briefly notice a few philosophical and mechanical inventions which have an obvious bearing on Religion, and on the general propagation of Christianity among the nations.

The first, and perhaps the most important of the inventions to which I allude, is the Art of Printing. This art appears to have been invented (at least in Europe) about the year 1430, by one Laurentius or Lawrence Koster, a native of Haerlem, a town in Holland. As he was walking in a wood near the city, he began to cut some letters upon the rind of a beach tree, which, for the sake of gratifying his fancy, being impressed on paper, he printed one or two lines as a specimen for his grandchildren to follow. This having succeeded, he meditated greater things; and first of all, invented a more glutinous writing ink; because he found the common ink sunk and spread; and thus formed whole pages of wood, with letters cut upon them.* By the gradual improvement of

* I am aware, that the honor of this invention has been claimed by other cities besides Haerlem, particularly by Strasburg, and Mentz, a city of Germany; and by other individuals besides Laurentius, chiefly by one *Fust*, commonly called Dr. Faustus; by Schoeffer, and by Gutenberg. It appears that the art, with many of its implements, was stolen from Laurentius by one of his servants, whom he had bound, by an oath, to secrecy, who fled to Mentz, and first commenced the process of printing in that city. Here the art was improved by Fust and Schoeffer, by their invention of *metallic*, instead of *wooden* types, which were first used. When Fust was in Paris, disposing of some Bibles he had printed, at the low price (as was then thought) of sixty crowns, the number, and the uniformity of the copies he possessed, created universal agitation and astonishment. Informations were given to the Police against him as a magician, his lodgings were searched, and a great number of copies being found, they were seized; the red ink with which they were embellished, was said to be his blood; "

this art, and its application to the diffusion of knowledge, a new era was formed in the annals of the human race, and in the progress of science, religion, and morals. To it we are chiefly indebted for our deliverance from ignorance and error, and for most of those scientific discoveries and improvements in the arts which distinguish the period in which we live.—Without its aid, the Reformation from Popery could scarcely have been achieved; for, had the books of Luther, one of the first reformers, been multiplied by the slow process of hand-writing and copying, they could never have been diffused to any extent; and the influence of bribery and of power might have been sufficient to have arrested their progress, or even to have erased their existence. But, being poured forth from the press in thousands at a time, they spread over the nations of Europe like an inundation, and with a rapidity which neither the authority of princes, nor the schemes of priests and cardinals, nor the bulls of popes, could counteract or suspend.—To this noble invention it is owing that copies of the Bible have been multiplied to the extent of many millions—that ten thousands of them are to be found in every Protestant country—and that the poorest individual who expresses a desire for it,

was seriously adjudged, that he was in league with the Devil; and if he had not fled from the city, most probably he would have shared the fate of those whom ignorant and superstitious judges, at that time, condemned for witchcraft. From this circumstance, let us learn to beware how we view the inventions of genius, and how we treat those whose ingenious contrivances may afterwards be the means of enlightening and meliorating mankind. See *Appendix*. No. VII.

Various improvements have been made, of late years, in the art of printing. That which has lately been announced by Dr. Church of Boston, is the most remarkable; and, if found successful, will carry this art to a high degree of perfection. A principal object of this improvement is, to print constantly from new types, which is effected by simplifying the process for casting and composing. The type is delivered perfect by machinery, and laid as it is cast, in separate compartments, with unerring order and exactness. The composition is then effected by other apparatus, directed by keys like those of a piano-forte, and the type may then be arranged in words and lines, as quickly as in the performance of notes in music. No error can arise except from touching the wrong key; and hence an expert hand will leave little labor for the reader. It is then found less expensive under Dr. Church's economical system of re-casting, to re-melt the types, and re-cast them, than to perform the tedious operation of distribution. The melting takes place without atmospheric exposure, by which oxydation and waste of metal are avoided. It is calculated that two men can produce 75,000 new types per hour, and in re-composing, one man will perform as much as three or four compositors. In the production of types, the saving is ninety-nine parts in a hundred; and in the composition, distribution, and reading, is three parts in four. In regard to press-work, Dr. C. has invented a machine to work with plattens, instead of cylinders, from which he will be enabled to take 30 fine impressions per minute.

may be furnished with the "Word of Life" which will guide him to a blessed immortality. That Divine light which is destined to illuminate every region of the globe, and to sanctify and reform men of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, is accelerated in its movements, and directed in its course through the nations, by the invention of the Art of Printing; and ere long, it will distribute among the inhabitants of every land, the "Law and the Testimony of the Most High," to guide their steps to the regions of eternal bliss. In short, there is not a more powerful engine in the hands of Providence, for diffusing the knowledge of the nature and the will of the Deity, and for accomplishing the grand objects of Revelation, than the art of multiplying books, and of conveying intelligence through the medium of the Press. Were no such art in existence, we cannot conceive how an extensive and universal propagation of the doctrines of Revelation could be effected, unless after the lapse of an indefinite number of ages. But, with the assistance of this invention, in its present improved state, the island of Great Britain alone, within less than a hundred years, could furnish a copy of the Scriptures to every inhabitant of the world, and could defray the expense of such an undertaking, with much more ease, and with a smaller sum than were necessary to furnish the political warfare in which we were lately engaged.

These considerations teach us, that the ingenious inventions of the human mind are under the direction and control of the Governor of the world—are intimately connected with the accomplishment of the plan of his providence, and have a tendency, either directly or indirectly, to promote, over every region of the earth, the progress and extension of the kingdom of the Redeemer. They also show us, from what small beginnings the most magnificent operations of the Divine economy may derive their origin. Who could have imagined that the simple circumstance of a person amusing himself by cutting a few letters on the bark of a tree, and impressing them on paper, was intimately connected with the mental illumination of mankind; and that the art which sprung from this casual process was destined to be the principal means of illuminating the nations, and of conveying to the ends of the earth, "the salvation of our God?" But, "He who rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth," and who sees "the end from the beginning," overrules the most minute movement of all his creatures, in subserviency to his ultimate designs, and shows himself, in this respect, to be "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

THE MARINER'S COMPASS.—Another invention which has an intimate relation to religion, is, *the Art of Navigation, and the invention of the* MARINER'S COMPASS. Navigation is the art of conducting a ship through the sea, from one port to another. This art was partly known and practised in the early ages of antiquity, by the Phenicians, the Carthaginians, the Egyptians, the Romans, and other nations of Europe and Asia. But they had no guide to direct them in their voyages, except the sun in the day time, and the stars by night. When the sky was overcast with clouds, they were thrown into alarms, and durst not venture to any great distance from the coast, lest they should be carried forward in a course opposite to that which they intended, or be driven against hidden rocks, or unknown shores. The danger and difficulty of the navigation of the ancients, on this account, may be learned from the deliberations, the great preparations, and the alarms of Homer's heroes, when they were about to cross the Egean Sea, an extent of not more than 150 miles; and the expedition of the Argonauts under Jason, across the sea of Marmora and the Euxine, to the island of Colchis, a distance of only four or five hundred miles, was viewed at a most wonderful exploit at which even the gods themselves were said to be amazed. The same thing appears from the narration we have in the Acts of the Apostles, of Paul's voyage from Cisarea to Rome. "When," says Luke, "neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempests lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." Being deprived of these guides, they were tossed about in the Mediterranean, not knowing whether they were carried to north, south, east, or west. So that the voyages of antiquity consisted chiefly in creeping along the coast, and seldom venturing beyond sight of land: they could not, therefore, extend their excursions by sea to distant continents and nations; and hence, the greater portion of the terraqueous globe and its inhabitants were to them altogether unknown. It was not before the invention of the *Mariner's Compass*, that distant voyages could be undertaken, that extensive oceans could be traversed, and an intercourse carried on between remote continents and the islands of the ocean.

It is somewhat uncertain at what precise period this noble discovery was made; but it appears pretty evident, that the Mariner's Compass was not commonly used in navigation before the year 1420, or only a few years before the invention of Printing.* The loadstone, in all ages, was known to have the

* The invention of the Compass is usually ascribed to Falvio Gioia, of Amalfi, in Campania, about the year 1302; and the Italians are strenuous

property of attracting iron; but its tendency to point towards the north and south seems to have been unnoticed till the beginning of the twelfth century. About that time some curious persons seem to have amused themselves by making to swim, in a basin of water, a loadstone suspended on a piece of cork; and to have remarked, that, when left at liberty, one of its extremities pointed to the north. They had also remarked, that, when a piece of iron is rubbed against the loadstone, it acquires also the property of turning towards the north, and of attracting needles and filings of iron. From one experiment to another, they proceeded to lay a needle, touched with the magnet, on two small bits of straw floating on the water, and to observe that the needle invariably turned its point towards the north. The first use they seem to have made of these experiments, was, to impose upon simple people by the appearance of *magic*. For example, a hollow swan, or the figure of a mermaid, was made to swim in a basin of water, and to follow a knive with a bit of bread upon its point which had been previously rubbed on the loadstone. The experimenter convinced them of his power, by commanding, in this way, a needle laid on the surface of the water, to turn its point from the north to the east, or in any other direction. But, some geniuses, of more sublime and reflective powers of mind, seizing upon these hints, at last applied these experiments to the wants of navigation, and constructed an instrument by the help of which the mariner can now direct his course to distant lands, through the vast and pathless ocean.

In consequence of the discovery of this instrument, the coasts of almost every land on the surface of the globe have been explored, and a regular intercourse opened up between the remotest regions of the earth. Without the help of this noble invention, America, in all probability, would never have been discovered by the eastern nations—the vast continent of New-Holland—the numerous and interesting islands in the Indian and Pacific oceans—the isles of Japan, and other immense territories inhabited by human beings, would have remained as much unknown and unexplored as if they had never

in supporting this claim. Others affirm, that Marcus Paulus, a Venetian, having made a journey to China, brought back the invention with him in 1260. The French also lay claim to the honor of this invention, from the circumstance, that all nations distinguish the *North* point of the card by a *fleur de lis;* and with equal reason, the English have laid claim to the same honor, from the name *compass*, by which most nations have agreed to distinguish it. But whoever were the inventors, or at whatever period this instrument was first constructed, it does not appear that it was brought into general use, before the period mentioned in the text.

existed. And as the nations of Europe, and the western parts of Asia, were the sole depositories of the records of Revelation, they could never have conveyed the blessings of salvation to remote countries, and to unknown tribes of mankind, of whose existence they were entirely ignorant. Even although the whole terraqueous globe had been sketched out before them, in all its aspects and bearings, and ramifications of islands, continents, seas, and oceans, and the moral and political state of every tribe of its inhabitants displayed to view;—without a guide to direct their course through the billows of the ocean, they could have afforded no light and no relief to cheer the distant nations "who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death." Though the art of Printing had been invented; though millions of Bibles were now prepared, adequate to the supply of all the "kindreds of the heathen;" though ships in abundance were equipped for the enterprise, and thousands of missionaries ready to embark, and to devote their lives to the instruction of the Pagan world—all would be of no avail, and the "salvation of God" could never be proclaimed to the ends of the world, unless they had a Mariner's Compass to guide their course through the trackless ocean.

In this invention, then, we behold a proof of the agency of Divine Providence, in directing the efforts of human genius to subserve the most important designs, and contemplate a striking specimen of the "manifold wisdom of God." When the pious and contemplative Israelite reflected on the declaration of the prophets, that "the glory of Jehovah would be revealed, and that all flesh would see it together;"—from the state of the arts which then existed, he must have felt many difficulties in forming a conception of the *manner* in which such predictions could be realized.—"The great and wide sea," now termed the Mediterranean, formed the boundary of his view, beyond which he was unable to penetrate. Of the continents, and "the isles afar off," and of the far more spacious oceans that lay between, he had no knowledge; and how "the ends of the earth" were to be reached, he could form no conception; and, in the midst of his perplexing thoughts, he could find no satisfaction only in the firm belief, that "with God all things are possible." But now we are enabled not only to contemplate the grand designs of the Divine economy, but the principal means by which they shall all, in due time, be accomplished, in consequence of the progress of science and art, and of their consecration to the rearing and extension of the Christian church.

The two inventions to which I have now adverted, may

perhaps, be considered as among the most striking instances of the connection of human art with the objects of Religion But there are many other inventions which, at first view, do not appear to bear so near a relation to the progress of Christianity, and yet have an ultimate reference to some of its grand and interesting objects.

The Telescope.—We might be apt to think, on a slight view of the matter, that there can be no immediate relation between the grinding and polishing of an optic glass, and fitting two or more of them in a tube, and—the enlargement of our views of the operation of the Eternal Mind. Yet the connection between these two objects, and the dependance of the latter upon the former, can be fairly demonstrated.—The son of a spectacle-maker of Middleburg in Holland, happening to amuse himself in his father's shop, by holding two glasses between his finger and his thumb, and varying their distance. perceived the weather-cock of the church spire opposite to him, much larger than ordinary, and apparently much nearer and turned upside down. This new wonder exercised the amazement of the father; he adjusted two glasses on a board rendering them moveable at pleasure; and thus formed the first rude imitation of a perspective glass, by which distant objects are brought near to view. Galileo, a philosopher of Tuscany, hearing of the invention, set his mind to work, in order to bring it to perfection. He fixed his glasses at the end of long organ-pipes, and constructed a telescope, which he soon directed to different parts of the surrounding heavens. He discovered four moons revolving around the planet Jupiter—spots on the surface of the Sun, and the rotation of that globe around its axis—mountains and valleys in the moon—and numbers of fixed stars where scarcely one was visible to the naked eye. These discoveries were made about the year 1610, a short time after the first invention of the telescope. Since that period this instrument has passed through various degrees of improvement, and, by means of it, celestial wonders have been explored in the distant spaces of the universe, which, in former times, were altogether concealed from mortal view. By the help of telescopes, combined with the art of measuring the distances and magnitudes of the heavenly bodies, our views of the Grandeur of the Almighty, of the plenitude of his Power, and of the *extent* of his universal Empire, are extended far beyond what could have been conceived in former ages. Our prospects of the range of the Divine operations are no longer confined within the limits of the world we inhabit;—we can now plainly perceive, that the kingdom of

God is not only "an everlasting dominion," but that it extends through the unlimited regions of space, comprehending within its vast circumference thousands of suns, and ten thousands of worlds, all ranged in majestic order, at immense distances from one another, and all supported and governed "by Him who rides on the Heaven of Heavens," whose greatness is unsearchable, and whose understanding is infinite.

The telescope has also demonstrated to us the *literal truth* of those scriptural declarations which assert that the stars are "innumerable." Before the invention of this instrument, not more than about a thousand stars could be perceived by the unassisted eye in the clearest night. But this invention has unfolded to view not only thousands, but hundreds of thousands, and millions of those bright luminaries, which lie dispersed in every direction throughout the boundless dimensions of space. And, the higher the magnifying powers of the telescope are, the more numerous those celestial orbs appear; leaving us no room to doubt, that countless myriads more lie hid in the distant regions of creation, far beyond the reach of the finest glasses that can be constructed by human skill, and which are known only to Him "who counts the number of the stars, and calls them by their names."

In short, the telescope may be considered as serving the purpose of a vehicle for conveying us to the distant regions of space. We would consider it as a wonderful achievement, could we transport ourselves two hundred thousand miles from the earth, in the direction of the Moon, in order to take a nearer view of that celestial orb. But this instrument enables us to take a much nearer inspection of that planet, than if we had actually surmounted the force of gravitation, traversed the voids of space, and left the earth 230,000 miles behind us. For, supposing such a journey to be accomplished, we should still be ten thousand miles distant from the orb. But a telescope which magnifies objects 240 times, can carry our views within ONE thousand miles of the moon; and a telescope, such as Dr. Herschel's 40 feet reflector, which magnifies 6000 times, would enable us to view the mountains and vales of the moon, as if we were transported to a point about 40 miles from her surface.* We can view the magnificent system of the planet

* Though the highest magnifying power of Dr. Herschel's large telescope was estimated at six thousand times, yet it does not appear that the Doctor ever applied this power with success, when viewing the moon and the planets. The deficiency of light, when using so high a power, would render the view of these objects less satisfactory than when viewed with a power of one or two thousand times. Still, it is quite certain, that if any

Saturn, by means of this instrument as distinctly, as if we had performed a journey eight hundred millions of miles in the direction of that globe, which, at the rate of 50 miles an hour would require a period of more than eighteen hundred years to accomplish. By the telescope, we can contemplate the region of the fixed stars, their arrangement into systems, and their immense numbers, with the same distinctness and amplitude of view, as if we had actually taken a flight of ten hundred thousand millions of miles into those unexplored and unexplorable regions, which could not be accomplished in several millions of years, though our motion were as rapid as a ball projected from a loaded cannon. We would justly consider it as a noble endowment for enabling us to take an extensive survey of the works of God, if we had the faculty of transporting ourselves to such immense distances from the sphere we now occupy; but, by means of the telescopic tube, we may take nearly the same ample views, of the dominions of the Creator, without stirring a foot from the limits of our terrestrial abode. This instrument may, therefore, be considered as a providential gift, bestowed upon mankind, to serve, in the mean time, as a *temporary substitute* for those powers of rapid flight with which the seraphim are endowed, and for those superior faculties of motion with which man himself may be invested, when he arrives at the summit of moral perfection.*

THE MICROSCOPE.—The *Microscope* is another instrument constructed on similar principles, which has greatly expanded our views of the "manifold wisdom of God." This instrument, which discovers to us small objects, invisible to the naked eye, was invented soon after the invention and improvement of the telescope. By means of this optical contrivance, we perceive a variety of wonders in almost every object in the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral kingdoms. We perceive that every particle of matter, however minute, has a

portions of the moon's surface were viewed through an instrument of such a power, they would appear as *large* (but *not nearly so bright and distinct*) as if we were placed about 40 miles distant from that body. The enlargement of the angle of vision, in this case, or, the apparent distance at which the moon would be contemplated, is found by dividing the moon's distance—240,000 miles by 6000, the magnifying power of the telescope, which produces a quotient of 40—the number of miles at which the moon would appear to be placed from the eye of the observer. Dr. Herschel appears to have used the highest power of his telescopes only, or chiefly, when viewing some very minute objects in the region of the stars. The powers he generally used, and with which he made most of his discoveries were, 227, 460, 754, 932, and occasionally 2010, 3168, and 6450 when inspecting double and treble stars, and the more distant nebulæ.

* See Appendix, No. VIII.

determinate form—that the very scales of the skin of a haddock are all beautifully interwoven and variegated, like pieces of net-work, which no art can imitate—that the points of the prickles of vegetables, though magnified a thousand times, appear as sharp and well polished as to the naked eye—that every particle of the dust on the butterfly's wing is a beautiful and regularly organized feather—that every hair of our head is a hollow tube, with bulbs and roots, furnished with a variety of threads or filaments—and that the pores in our skin, through which the sweat and perspiration flow, are so numerous and minute, that a grain of sand would cover a hundred and twenty-five thousand of them. We perceive animated beings in certain liquids, so small, that fifty thousand of them would not equal the size of a mite; and yet each of these creatures is furnished with a mouth, eyes, stomach, blood-vessels, and other organs for the performance of animal functions. In a stagnant pool which is covered with a greenish scum during the summer months, every drop of the water is found to be a world teeming with thousands of inhabitants. The mouldy substance which usually adheres to damp bodies exhibits a forest of trees and plants, where the branches, leaves, and fruit, can be plainly distinguished. In a word, by this admirable instrument we behold the same Almighty Hand which rounded the spacious globe on which we live, and the huge masses of the planetary orbs, and directs them in their rapid motions through the sky,—employed, at the same moment, in rounding and polishing ten thousand minute transparent globes in the eye of a fly; and boring and arranging veins and arteries, and forming and clasping joints and claws, for the movements of a mite! We thus learn the admirable and astonishing effects of the Wisdom of God, and that the Divine Care and Benevolence are as much displayed in the construction of the smallest insect, as in the elephant, or the whale, or in those ponderous globes which roll around us in the sky. These, and thousands of other views which the miscroscope exhibits, would never have been displayed to the human mind, had they not been opened up by this admirable invention.

In fine, by means of the two instruments to which I have now adverted, we behold Jehovah's empire extending to infinity on either hand. By the telescope we are presented with the most astonishing displays of his *omnipotence*, in the immense number, the rapid motions, and the inconceivable magnitude of the celestial globes;—and, by the microscope, we behold, what is still more inconceivable, a display of his unsearchable wisdom in the Divine mechanism, by which a drop

of water is peopled with myriads of inhabitants—a fact, which, were it not subject to ocular demonstration, would far exceed the limits of human conception or belief. We have thus the most striking and sensible evidence, that, from the immeasurable luminaries of heaven, and from the loftiest seraph that stands before the throne of God, down to this lower world, and to the smallest microscopic animalcula that eludes the finest glass—*He* is every where present, and, by his power, intelligence, and agency, animates, supports, and directs the whole. Such views and contemplations naturally lead us to advert to the character of God as delineated by the sacred writers, that "He is of great power and mighty in strength;" that "His understanding is infinite;" that "His works are wonderful;" that "His operations are unsearchable and past finding out;" and they must excite the devout mind to join with fervor in the language of adoration and praise.

When thy amazing works, O God!
My mental eye surveys,
"Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise."

Steam Navigation.—We might have been apt to suppose that the chemical experiments that were first made to demonstrate the force of *Steam* as a mechanical agent, could have little relation to the objects of religion, or even to the comfort of human life and society. Yet it has now been applied to the impelling of ships and large boats along rivers and seas, in opposition to both wind and tide, and with a velocity which, at an average, exceeds that of any other conveyance. We have no reason to believe that this invention has hitherto approximated to a state of perfection; it is yet in its infancy, and may be susceptible of such improvements, both in point of expedition and of safety, as may render it the most comfortable and speedy conveyance between distant lands, for transporting the volume of inspiration, and the heralds of the gospel of peace to "the ends of the earth." By the help of his compass the mariner is enabled to steer his course in the midst of the ocean, in the most cloudy days, and in the darkest nights, and to transport his vessel from one end of the world to another. It now only remains, that navigation be rendered safe, uniform and expeditious, and not dependant on adverse winds, or the currents of the ocean; and, perhaps the art of propelling vessels by the force of steam, when arrived at perfection, may effectuate those desirable purposes. Even at present, as the invention now stands, were a vessel fitted to encounter the waves of the Atlantic, constructed of a proper figure and

curvature, having a proper disposition of her wheels, and having such a description of fuel, as could be easily stowed, and in sufficient quantity for the voyage—at the rate of ten miles an hour, she could pass from the shores of Britain to the coast of America, in less than thirteen days;—and, even at eight miles an hour, the voyage could be completed in little more than fifteen days; so that intelligence might pass and repass between the eastern and western Continents within the space of a single month—a space of time very little more than was requisite, sixty years ago, for conveying intelligence between Glasgow and London. The greatest distance at which any two places on the globe lie from each other, is about 12,500 miles; and, therefore, if a direct portion of water intervene between them, this space could be traversed in fifty-four or sixty days. And, if the isthmus of Panama, which connects North and South America, and the isthmus of Suez, which separates the Mediterranean from the Red Sea, were cut into wide and deep canals, (which we have no doubt will be accomplished as soon as civilized nations have access to perform operations in these territories,) every country in the world could then be reached from Europe, in nearly a direct line; or, at most by a gentle curve, instead of the long, and dangerous, and circuitous route which must now be taken in sailing to the eastern parts of Asia, and the north-western shores of America. By this means, eight or nine thousand miles of sailing would be saved in a voyage from England to Nootka Sound, or the Peninsula of California; and more than six thousand miles, in passing from London to Bombay in the East Indies; and few places on the earth would be further distant from each other by water than 15,000 miles; which space might be traversed at the rate mentioned above, in a period from sixty-two to seventy-seven days.*

But we have reason to believe, that when this invention, combined with other mechanical assistances, shall approximate nearer to perfection, a much more rapid rate of motion will be effected; and the advantages of this, in a religious, as well as in a commercial point of view, may be easily appreciated; especially at the present period, when the Christian world, now aroused from their slumbers, have formed the grand design of sending a Bible to every inhabitant of the globe. When the empire of the Prince of Darkness shall be shaken throughout all its dependencies, and the nations aroused to inquire after light, and liberty, and divine knowledge—intelli-

* See Appendix, No. IX.

gence would thus be rapidly communicated over every region, and between the most distant tribes. "Many would run to and fro, and knowledge would be increased." The Ambassadors of the Redeemer, with the Oracles of Heaven in their hands, and the words of salvation in their mouths, would quickly be transported to every clime, "having the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Air Balloons.—Similar remarks may be applied to the *invention* of *Air Balloons*. We have heard of some pious people who have mourned over such inventions, and lamented the folly of mankind in studying their construction, and witnessing their exhibition. Such dispositions generally proceed from a narrow range of thought, and a contracted view of the Divine Economy and arrangements in the work of Redemption. Though the perversity of mankind has often applied useful inventions to foolish, and even to vicious purposes, yet this forms no reason why such inventions should be decried; otherwise the art of Printing, and many other useful arts, might be regarded as inimical to the human race. We have reason to believe that air balloons may yet be brought to such perfection, as to be applied to purposes highly beneficial to the progress of the human mind, and subservient, in some degree, for effecting the purposes of Providence in the enlightening and renovation of mankind. For this purpose, it is only requisite that some contrivance, on chemical or mechanical principles, be suggested, analogous to the sails or rudder of a ship, by which they may be moved in any direction, without being directed solely by the course of the wind; and, there can be little doubt that such a contrivance is *possible* to be effected. It requires only suitable encouragement to be given to ingenious experimental philosophers, and a sufficient sum of money to enable them to prosecute their experiments on an extensive scale. To the want of such pre-requisites, it is chiefly owing, that the hints on this subject, hitherto suggested, have either failed of success, or have never been carried into execution. A more simple and expeditious process for filling balloons has lately been effected—the use of the *parachute*, by which a person may detach himself from the balloon, and descend to the earth, has been successfully tried,—the lightning of heaven has been drawn from the clouds, and forced to act as a mechanical power in splitting immense stones to pieces,—the atmosphere has been analyzed into its component parts, and the wonderful properties of the ingredients of which it is composed, exhibited in their separate state:

and why, then, should we consider it as at all improbable that the means of producing a horizontal direction in aerial navigation, may soon be discovered? Were this object once effected, balloons might be applied to the purpose of surveying and exploring countries hitherto inaccessible, and of conveying the messengers of divine mercy to tribes of our fellow-men, whose existence is as yet unknown.

We are certain that every portion of the inhabited world must be thoroughly explored, and its inhabitants visited, before the salvation of God can be carried fully into effect; and, for the purpose of such explorations, we must, of course, resort to the inventions of human genius in art and science. Numerous tribes of the sons of Adam are, doubtless, residing in regions of the earth with which we have no acquaintance, and to which we have no access, by any of the modes of conveyance presently in use. More than one-half of the interior parts of Africa and Asia, and even of America, are wholly unknown to the inhabitants of the civilized world. The vast regions of Chinese Tartary, Thibet, Siberia, and the adjacent districts; almost the whole interior of Africa, and the continent of New Holland—the extensive isles of Borneo, Sumatra, New Guinea, and Japan, the territory of the Amazons, and the internal parts of North America, remain, for the most part, unknown and unexplored. The lofty and impassable ranges of mountains, and the deep and rapid rivers, which intervene between us and many of those regions, together with the savage and plundering hordes of men, and the tribes of ravenous beasts, through which the traveller must push his way—present to European adventurers, barriers which they cannot expect to surmount, by the ordinary modes of conveyance, for a lapse of ages. But, by balloons, constructed with an apparatus for directing their motions, all such obstructions would at once be surmounted. The most impenetrable regions, now hemmed in by streams and marshes, and lofty mountains, and a barbarous population, would be quickly laid open; and cities and nations, lakes and rivers, and fertile plains, to which we are now entire strangers, would soon burst upon the view. And the very circumstance, that the messengers of peace and salvation *descended upon such unknown tribes from the regions of the clouds*, might arouse their minds, and excite their attention and regard to the message of Divine mercy which they came thither to proclaim.* Such a scene (and it may probably be

* In this point of view, we cannot but feel the most poignant regret at the conduct of the Spaniards, after the discovery of America, towards the

realized) would present a literal fulfilment of the prediction of "*angels flying through the midst of*" the aerial "*heaven*, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, and to every kindred and nation."

That the attention of the philosophical world is presently directed to this subject, and that we have some prospect of the views above suggested being soon realized, will appear from the following notice, which lately made its appearance in the London Scientific Journals :—"A Prize being offered for the discovery of a horizontal direction in Aerostation, M. Mingreli of Bologna, M. Pietripoli of Venice, and M. Lember of Nuremberg, have each assumed the merit of resolving this problem. It does not appear that any one of these has come forward to establish, by practical experiment, the validity of his claim; but a pamphlet has lately been reprinted at Paris (first printed at Vienna) on this subject, addressed to all the learned Societies in Europe. The following passage appears in the work :—"Professor Robertson proposes to construct an aerostic machine, 150 feet in diameter, to be capable of raising 72,954 killograms, equivalent to 149,037 lbs. weight (French.) To be capable of conveying all necessaries for the support of sixty individuals, scientific characters, to be selected by the Academicians, and the aerial navigations to last for some months, exploring different heights and climates, &c. in all

natives of that country. When those untutored people beheld the ships which had conveyed Columbus and his associates from the eastern world, the dresses and martial order of his troops, and heard their music, and the thunder of their cannon, they were filled with astonishment and wonder at the strange objects presented to their view; they fell prostrate at their feet, and viewed them as a superior race of men. When *Cortes* afterwards entered the territories of Mexico, the same sentiments of reverence and admiration seemed to pervade its inhabitants. Had pure Christian motives actuated the minds of these adventurers, and had it been their ruling desire to communicate to those ignorant tribes the blessings of the Gospel of peace, and to administer to their external comfort, the circumstances now stated would have been highly favourable to the success of missionary exertion, and would have led them to listen with attention to the message from heaven. But, unfortunately for the cause of religion, treachery, lust, cruelty, selfishness and the cursed love of gold, predominated over every other feeling, affixed a stigma to the Christian name, and rendered them curses, instead of blessings, to that newly-discovered race of men. It is most earnestly to be wished, that, in future expeditions in quest of unknown tribes, a few intelligent and philanthropic missionaries were appointed to direct the adventurers in their moral conduct and intercourse with the people they visit, in order that nothing inconsistent with Christian principle make its appearance. The uniform manifestation of Christian benevolence, purity, and rectitude, by a superior race of men, would win the affections of a rude people far more effectually than all the pomp and ensigns of military parade.

seasons. If, from accident, or wear, the machine, elevated above the ocean, should fail in its functions, to be furnished with a ship that will ensure the return of the Aeronauts."

Should any one be disposed to insinuate, that the views now stated on this subject are chimerical and fallacious, I beg leave to remind them, that, not more than twenty years ago, the idea of a large vessel, without oars and sails, to be navigated against the wind, with the rapidity of ten miles an hour, would have been considered as next to an impossibility, and a mere fanciful scheme, which could never be realized. Yet we now behold such vehicles transporting whole villages to the places of their destination, with a degree of ease, comfort, and expedition, formerly unknown. And little more than forty years have elapsed, since it would have been viewed as still more chimerical to have broached the idea, that a machine might be constructed, by which human beings might ascend more than two miles above the surface of the earth, and fly through the region of the clouds at the rate of seventy miles an hour, carrying along with them books, instruments, and provisions. Yet both these schemes have been fully realized, and, like many other inventions of the human intellect, are doubtless intended to subserve some important ends in the economy of Divine Providence.*

* Balloons were first constructed in the year 1783, by Messrs. S. and J. Mongolfier, paper-manufacturers at Annonay, in France. A sheep, a cock, and a duck, were the first animals ever carried up into the air by these vehicles. At the end of their journey, they were found perfectly safe and unhurt, and the sheep was even feeding at perfect ease. The first *human* being who ascended into the atmosphere in one of these machines, was M. Pilatre de Rozier. This adventurer ascended from amidst an astonished multitude assembled in a garden in Paris, on the 15th October, 1783, in a balloon, whose diameter was 48 feet, and its height about 74; and remained suspended above the city about four hours. Mr. Lunardi, an Italian, soon after, astonished the people of England and Scotland, by his aerial excursions. Dr. G. Gregory gives the following account of his ascent:—"I was myself a spectator of the flight of Lunardi, and I never was present at a sight so interesting and sublime. The beauty of the gradual ascent, united with a sentiment of terror, on account of the danger of the man, and the novelty and grandeur of the whole appearance, are more than words can express. A delicate woman was so overcome with the spectacle, that she lied upon the spot, as the balloon ascended; several fainted; and the silent admiration of the anxious multitude was beyond any thing I had ever beheld."

Balloons have been generally made of varnished silk, and of the shape of a globe or a spheroid, from thirty to fifty feet in diameter. They are filled with hydrogen gas, which, as formerly stated, is from twelve to fifteen times lighter than common air: and they rise into the atmosphere, on the same principle as a piece of cork ascends from the bottom of a pail of water. The aerial travellers are seated in a basket below the balloon, which is attached to it by means of cords.—The *Parachute* is an invention,

Acoustic Tunnels.—By means of the inventions just now adverted to, when brought to perfection, mankind may be enabled to transport themselves to every region of the globe, with a much greater degree of rapidity than has hitherto been attained. By the help of the microscope, we are enabled to contemplate the invisible worlds of life, and by the telescope we can penetrate into regions far beyond the range of the unassisted eye. By the arts of Writing and Printing, we can communicate our sentiments, after a certain lapse of time, to every quarter of the world. In the progress of human knowledge and improvement, it would obviously be of considerable importance, *could we extend the range of the human voice*, and communicate intelligence to the distance of a thousand miles, in the course of two or three hours; or could we hold an occasional conversation with a friend at the distance of 20 or 30 miles. From the experiments which have been lately made, in reference to the conveyance of sound, we have some reason to believe, that such objects may not be altogether unattainable. It has been long known, that wood is a good conductor of sound. If a watch be laid on the end of a long beam of timber, its beating will be distinctly heard, on applying the ear to the other end, though it could not be heard at the same distance through the air. In "Nicholson's Philosophical Journal" for February, 1803, Mr. E. Walker describes a simple apparatus, connected with a speaking trumpet, by means of which, at the distance of 17½ feet, he held a conversation with another in whispers, too low to be heard through the air at that distance. When the ear was placed in a certain position, the words were heard as if they had been spoken by an invisible being within the trumpet. And what rendered the deception still more pleasing, the words were more distinct, softer, and more musical, than if they had been spoken through the air.

About the year 1750, a merchant of Cleves, named Jorissen, who had become almost totally deaf, sitting one day near a harpsichord, while some one was playing, and having a tobacco-pipe in his mouth, the bowl of which rested accidentally against the body of the instrument, he was agreeably and unexpectedly surprised to hear all the notes in the most distinct manner. By a little reflection and practice, he again

oy which the voyager, in cases of alarm, may be enabled to desert his balloon in mid-air, and descend, without injury, to the ground. They resemble an umbrella, but are of far greater extent. With one of these contrivances, twenty-three feet in diameter, M. Garnerin, having detached himself from his balloon, descended from a height of more than 4000 feet, and landed without shock or accident.

obtained the use of this valuable sense; for he soon learned, by means of a piece of hard wood, one end of which he placed against his teeth, while another person placed the other end on his teeth, to keep up a conversation, and to be able to understand the least whisper. In this way, two persons who have stopped their ears may converse with each other, when they hold a long stick or a series of sticks, between their teeth, or rest their teeth against them. The effect is the same, if the person who speaks rest the stick against his throat, or his breast, or when one rests the stick which he holds in his teeth against some vessel into which the other speaks; and the effect will be the greater, the more the vessel is capable of tremulous motion. These experiments demonstrate the facility with which the softest whispers may be transmitted.—Water, too, is found to be a good conductor of sound. Dr. Franklin assures us, that he has heard under water, at the distance of half a mile, the sound of two stones struck against each other. It has been also observed, that the *velocity* of sound is much greater in solid bodies, than in the air. By a series of experiments, instituted for the purpose of determining this point, Mr. Chladni found that the velocity of sound, in certain solid bodies, is 16 or 17 times as great as in air.

But what has a more particular bearing on the object hinted at above, is, the experiments lately made by M. Biot, "on the transmission of sound through solid bodies, and through air, in very long tubes." These experiments were made by means of long cylindrical pipes, which were constructing for conduits and aqueducts, to embellish the city of Paris. With regard to the *velocity* of sound, it was ascertained that "its transmission through cast iron is 10½ times as quick as through air." The pipes by which he wished to ascertain at what distance sounds are audible, were 1,039 yards, or nearly five furlongs, in length. M. Biot was stationed at the one end of this series of pipes, and Mr. Martin, a gentleman who assisted in the experiments, at the other. They heard the lowest voice, so as perfectly to distinguish the words, and to keep up a conversation on all the subjects of the experiments. "I wished," says M. Biot, "to determine the point at which the human voice ceases to be audible, but could not accomplish it: words spoken as low as when we whisper a secret in another's ear, were heard and understood; so that not to be heard, there was but one resource, that of not speaking at all. —This mode of conversing with an invisible neighbor, is so singular that we cannot help being surprised, even though acquainted with the cause. Between a question and answer,

the interval was not greater than was necessary for the transmission of sound. For Mr. Martin and me, at the distance of 1,039 yards, this time was about 5¼ seconds." Reports of a pistol fired at one end, occasioned a considerable explosion at the other. The air was driven out of the pipe with sufficient force to give the hand a smart blow, to drive light substances out of it to the distance of half a yard, and to extinguish a candle, though it was 1,039 yards distant from the place where the pistol was fired. A detailed account of these experiments may be seen in *Nicholson's Phil. Jour. for October*, 1811. Don Gautier, the inventor of the Telegraph, suggested also the method of conveying articulate sounds to a great distance. He proposed to build horizontal tunnels, widening at the remoter extremity, and found that at the distance of 400 fathoms, or nearly half a mile, the ticking of a watch could be heard far better than close to the ear. He calculated that a series of such tunnels would convey a message 900 miles in an hour.

From the experiments now stated, it appears highly probable, that sounds may be conveyed to an indefinite distance. If one man can converse with another at the distance of nearly three quarters of a mile, *by means of the softest whisper*, there is every reason to believe, that they could hold a conversation at the distance of 30 or 40 miles, provided the requisite tunnels were constructed for this purpose. The latter case does not appear more wonderful than the former. Were this point fully determined, by experiments conducted on a more extensive scale, a variety of interesting effects would follow, from a practical application of the results. A person at one end of a large city, at an appointed hour, might communicate a message, or hold a conversation with his friend, at another; friends in neighbouring, or even in distant towns, might hold an occasional correspondence by articulate sounds, and recognize each other's identity by their tones of voice. In the case of sickness, accident, or death, intelligence could thus be instantly communicated, and the tender sympathy of friends immediately exchanged. A clergyman sitting in his own room in Edinburgh, were it at any time expedient, might address a congregation in Musselburgh or Dalkeith, or even in Glasgow. He might preach the same sermon to his own church, and the next hour to an assembly at forty miles distant. And surely there could be no valid objection to trying the effect of an *invisible preacher* on a Christian audience. On similar principles, an apparatus might be constructed for augmenting the strength of the human voice, so as to make it extend its force

to an assembled multitude, composed of fifty or a hundred thousand individuals; and the utility of such a power, when the mass of mankind are once thoroughly aroused to attend to rational and religious instruction, may be easily conceived. In short, intelligence respecting every important discovery, occurrence, and event, might thus be communicated, through the extent of a whole kingdom, within the space of an hour after it had taken place.

Let none imagine that such a project is either chimerical or impossible. M. Biot's experiment is decisive, so far as it goes; that the *softest whisper*, without any diminution of its intensity, may be communicated to the distance of nearly three quarters of a mile; and there is nothing but actual experiment wanting to convince us, that the ordinary tones of the human voice may be conveyed to at least twenty times that distance. We are just now acting on a similar principle, in distributing illumination through large cities. Not thirty years ago, the idea of lighting our apartments by an invisible substance, produced at ten miles' distance, would have been considered as chimerical, and as impossible to be realized, as the idea of two persons conversing together, by articulate sounds, at such a distance. It appears no more wonderful, that we should be able to *hear* at the distance of five or six miles, than that we should be enabled to *see* objects at that distance by the telescope, as distinctly as if we were within a few yards o them. Both are the effects of those principles and laws whicl the Creator has interwoven with the system of the material world; and when man has discovered the mode of their operation, it remains with himself to apply them to his necessities. What the telescope is to the eye, acoustic tunnels would be to the ear; and thus, those senses on which our improvement in knowledge and enjoyment chiefly depends, would be gradually carried to the utmost perfection of which our station on earth will permit. And, as to the *expense* of constructing such com munications for sound, the *tenth part* of the millions of money expended in twenty-two years' war in which we were lately engaged, would, in all probability, be more than sufficient for distributing them in numerous ramifications, through the whole island of Great Britain, Even although such a project were partially to fail of success, it would be a far more honorable and useful national undertaking, than that which now occupies the attention of the despots on the continent of Europe, and might be accomplished with far less expenditure, either of blood or of money. Less than the fourth part of a million of pounds would be sufficient for trying an experiment of this

kind, on an extensive scale; and such a sum is considered as a mere *item*, when fleets and armies are to be equipped for carrying destruction through sea and land. When will the war-madness cease its rage! When will men desist from the work of destruction, and employ their energies and their treasures in the cause of human improvement! The most chimerical projects that were ever suggested by the most enthusiastic visionary, are not half so ridiculous, and *degrading* to the character of man, as those ambitious and despotic schemes, in which the powers of the earth in all ages have been chiefly engaged,—But on this topic it is needless to enlarge, till more extended experiments shall have been undertaken.

In the preceding sketches I have presented a few specimens of the relation which the inventions of human ingenuity bear to religious objects. I intended to have traced the same relation in several other instances; in the invention of the electrical machine, the air-pump, mills, clocks and watches, gas-lights, chemical fumigations, inventions for enabling us to walk upon the water, to prevent and alleviate the dangers of shipwreck, &c. &c. But, as my prescribed limits will not permit farther enlargement, I trust that what has been already stated will be sufficient to establish and illustrate my general position. From this subject we may learn—

1st, That the various processes of art, and the exertions of human ingenuity, are under the special direction of Him who arranges all things "according to the counsel of his will." As "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and as the rivers of waters, he turns it whithersoever he pleases;" so, all the varied schemes and movements of the human mind, the discoveries of science, and the diversified experiments of mechanics, chemists and philosophers, are directed in such channels as may issue in the accomplishment of His eternal purposes, in respect to the present and future condition of the inhabitants of our world. This truth is also plainly taught us in the records of inspiration, "Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin,* and cast in the wheat in the principal [place,] and the barley in the appointed place, and the rye in its proper place? *For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.* This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and

* *Fitches* is a kind of seed frequently sown in Judea, for the use of cattle; and *cummin* is the seed of a plant somewhat like fennel.

excellent in working." Agriculture has, by most nations, been attributed to the suggestions of Deity ; for " every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights." It is he who hath taught men to dig from the bowels of the earth, iron, copper, lead, silver and gold, and to apply them to useful purposes in social life ; and who hath given them " wisdom and understanding" to apply the animal and vegetable productions of nature to the manufacture of cloths, linen, muslin, and silk, for the use and the ornament of man. For " all things are of God." " Both riches and honor come from him, and he reigneth over all, and in his hand is power and might, and in his hand it is to make great, and to give strength to all." When the frame of the Mosaic Tabernacle, and all its curious vessels were to be constructed, the mind of Bezaleel " was filled with the spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise curious works in gold, and in silver, and in brass." And, when the fabric of the New Testament church is to be reared, and its boundaries are extended, artificers of every description, adequate for carrying on the different parts of the works are raised up, and inspired with the spirit of their respective departments—some with the spirit of writing, printing, and publishing ; some with the spirit of preaching, lecturing, and catechising ; some with the spirit of fortitude, to make bold and daring adventures into distant barbarous climes ; and others, with the spirit of literature, of science, and of the mechanical arts—all acting as pioneers " to prepare the way of the Lord," and as builders for carrying forward and completing the fabric of the Christian Church.

2dly, All the mechanical contrivances to which I have adverted, all the discoveries of science, and all the useful inventions of genius which may hereafter be exhibited, ought to be viewed as preparing the way for the *millennial era* of the church, and as having a certain tendency to the melioration of the external condition of mankind during its continuance. We are certain, from the very nature of things, as well as from scriptural predictions, that, when this period advances towards the summit of its glory, the external circumstances of this world's population will be comfortable, prosperous, and greatly meliorated beyond what they have ever been in the ages that are past—" Then shall the earth yield her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us. Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow thy ground withal, and bread of the increase of the earth ; and it shall be fat and plenteous. In that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures ; the oxen like-

wise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat savoury provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick. They shall build houses and inhabit them, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for, *as the days of a tree are the days of my people*, and mine elect shall *long enjoy* the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. The seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; the evil beasts shall cease out of the land, and they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make him afraid; for wars shall cease to the ends of the world, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."* Diseases will be, in a great measure, banished from the world, and the life of man extended far beyond its present duration—agriculture will be brought to perfection—commodious habitations erected for the comfortable accommodation of all ranks—cities built on elegant and spacious plans, adapted to health, ornament, and pleasure; divested of all the filth, and darkness, and gloom, and narrow lanes which now disgrace the abodes of men—roads will be constructed on improved principles, with comfortable means of retreat for shelter and accommodation at all seasons; and conveyances invented for the ease, and safety, and rapid conveyance of persons and property from one place to another. Either the climates of the earth will be meliorated, by the universal cultivation of the soil, so that storms and tempests, thunders and lightnings, shall no longer produce their present ravages: or chemical and mechanical contrivances will be invented to ward off their destructive effects. The landscape of the earth will be adorned with vegetable and architectural beauty; and, instead of horse-racing, demoralizing plays, routs, and masquerades, boxing, and bull-baits—artificial displays of scenery will be exhibited, more congenial to the dignity of rational, renovated, and immortal minds. For "the knowledge of the Lord," and the "beauties of holiness," will pervade men of all ranks and ages, "from the least even to the greatest."†

* Psalm lxvii. Isaiah xxx. 23, 24. xxxii. 24. lxv. 21, 23, &c.

† The various circumstances above-stated may be considered as the *natural results* of a state of society on which the light of science and of reve-

Now, as we have no reason to expect any *miraculous interference*, we must regard the past, and the future useful inventions of philosophy and mechanics, as having a bearing on this glorious period, and a tendency to promote the improvement and the felicity of those who shall live during this era of Messiah's reign. If diseases are to be generally abolished, it will be owing to the researches of the scientific physician in discovering certain antidotes against every disorder, and to the practice of temperance, meekness, equanimity of mind, and every other means of preserving the vigor of the animal frame. If the earth is to produce its treasures in abundance, and with little labour, it will be owing, in part, to the improvement of agricultural science, and of the instruments by which its operations are conducted. If the lightnings of heaven shall no longer prove destructive to man and to the labors of his hands, it will be effected either by machinery for drawing off the electricity of a stormy cloud, or by the invention of *thunder-guards*, which shall afford a complete protection from its ravages. In these, and numerous other instances, the inventions of men, under the guidance of the Spirit of Wisdom, will have a tendency to remove a great part of the *Curse* which has so long hung over our sinful world. And since the inventions of human skill and ingenuity for the melioration of mankind, and for the swift conveyance of intelligence have, of late years, been rapidily increasing, *at the same time* when the Christian world is roused to increased exertions in disseminating the Scriptures throughout all lands, when general knowledge is increasingly diffused, and when the fabric of Superstition and Despotism is shaking to its foundations,—these combined and simultaneous movements seem plainly to indicate, that that auspicious era is fast hastening on, when "the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," when "righteousness and praise shall spring forth before all

ation has diffused its full influence, and where the active powers of the human mind are invariably directed by the pure principles and precepts of Christianity. That the duration of human life, at the era referred to, will be extended beyond its present boundary, appears to be intimated in some of the passages above quoted, particularly the following—"*As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people*, and mine elect shall *long* enjoy the work of their hands." And, if the life of man will be thus protracted to an indefinite period, it will follow, that those *diseases* which now prey upon the human frame, and cut short its vital action, will be in a great measure extirpated. Both these effects may be viewed (without supposing any miraculous interference) as the natural consequence of that happiness and equanimity of mind which will flow from the practice of Christian virtues, from the enlargement of our knowledge of the principles of nature, and from the physical enjoyments which such a state of society will furnish.

nations," and when "Holiness to the Lord," shall be inscribed on all the pursuits, and implements, and employments of men.

Lastly,—If the remarks suggested above be well founded, we may conclude, that the mechanical and philosophical inventions of genius are worthy of the attentive consideration of the enlightened Christian, particularly in the relation they may have to the accomplishment of religious objects. He should contemplate the experiments of scientific men, not as a waste of time, or the mere gratification of an idle curiosity, but as embodying the germs of those improvements, by which civilization, domestic comfort, knowledge, and moral principle may be diffused among the nations. To view such objects with apathy and indifference, as beneath the regard of a religious character, argues a weak and limited understanding, and a contracted view of the grand operations of a Superintending Providence.

CHAPTER IV.

SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINES AND FACTS ILLUSTRATED FROM THE SYSTEM OF NATURE.*

WITHOUT spending time in any introductory observations on this subject, it may be remarked in general,

I.—*That scientific knowledge, or an acquaintance with the System of Nature, may frequently serve as a guide to the true interpretation of Scripture.*

It may be laid down as a universal principle, that there can be no real discrepancy between a just interpretation of Scripture, and the facts of physical science; and on this principle, the following canon is founded, which may be considered as an infallible rule for Scripture-interpretation, namely,—*That no interpretation of Scripture ought to be admitted which is inconsistent with any well-authenticated facts in the material world.* By *well-authenticated facts*, I do not mean the theories of philosophers, or the deductions they may have drawn from them, nor the confident assertions or plausible reasonings of scientific men in support of any prevailing system of Natural science; but those facts which are universally admitted, and the reality of which every scientific inquirer has it in his power to ascertain: such as that the earth is not an extended plane, but a round or globular body, and that the rays of the sun, when converged to a focus by a large convex glass, will set fire to combustible substances. Such facts, when ascertained, ought to be considered as a revelation from God, as well as the declarations of his word. For they make known to us a

* Under this head, it was originally intended to embrace an elucidation of a considerable variety of the facts recorded in the Sacred History, and of the allusions of the inspired writers to the system of nature; but as the volume has already swelled beyond the limits proposed, I am reluctantly compelled to confine myself to the illustration of only two or three topics.

portion of his character, of his plans and his operations.—This rule may be otherwise expressed as follows:—*Where a passage of Scripture is of doubtful meaning, or capable of different interpretation, that interpretation ought to be preferred which will best agree with the established discoveries of science.* For since the Author of revelation and the Author of universal nature is one and the same Infinite Being,—there must exist a complete harmony between the revelations of his word, and the facts or relations which are observed in the material universe. To suppose the contrary, would be to suppose the Almighty capable of inconsistency; a supposition which would go far to shake our confidence in the theology of Nature, as well as of Revelation. If, in any one instance, a Record claiming to be a Revelation from heaven were found to contradict a well-known fact in the material world; if, for example, it asserted, in express terms, to be literally understood, that the earth is a *quiescent* body in the centre of the universe, or that the moon is no larger than a mountain; it would be a fair conclusion, either that the revelation was not Divine, or that the passages embodying such assertions are interpolations, or, that science, in reference to these points, has not yet arrived at the truth. The example, we are aware, is inapplicable to the Christian Revelation, which rests securely on its own basis, and to which science is gradually approximating, as it advances in the amplitude of its views, and the correctness of its deductions;—but it shows us how necessary it is, in interpreting the *Word* of God, to keep our eye fixed upon his *Works;* for we may rest assured, that *truth* in the one will always correspond with fact in the other.

To illustrate the rule now laid down, an example or two may be stated.—If it be a fact that geological research has ascertained that the materials of the strata of the earth, are of a more ancient date than the Mosaic account of the commencement of the present race of men; the passages in the first chapter of Genesis, and other parts of Scripture, which refer to the origin of our world, must be explained as conveying the idea, that the earth was then merely *arranged* into its present form and order, out of the materials which *previously existed* in a confused mass, and which had been created by the Almighty at a prior period in duration. For Moses no where asserts, that the materials of our globe were created, or brought into existence out of nothing, at the time to which his history refers; but insinuates the contrary. "For the earth," says he, prior to its present constitution, "*was* without form and void," &c.—Again, if it be a fact that the universe is in-

o finitely extended, that, of many millions of vast globes which diversify the voids of space, only two or three have any immediate connexion with the earth; then it will appear most reasonable to conclude, that those expressions in the Mosaic history of the creation, which refer to the creation of the fixed stars, are not to be understood as referring to the *time* when they were brought into existence, as if they had been created about the same time with our earth; but, as simply declaring the fact, that, at what period soever in duration they were created, *they derived their existence from God.* That they did not all commence their existence at that period, is demonstrable from the fact, that, within the space of 2000 years past, and even within the space of the two last centuries, new stars have appeared in the heavens, which previously did not exist in the concave of the firmament; which, consequently, have been created since the Mosaic period; or, at least, had undergone a change analogous to that which took place in our globe, when it emerged from a chaotic state, to the form and order in which we now behold it. Consequently, the phrase, "God rested from all his works," must be understood, not absolutely, or in reference to the whole system of nature, but merely in relation to our world; and as importing, that the Creator then ceased to form any new species of beings *on the terraqueous globe.*—The same canon will direct us in the interpretation of those passages which refer to the last judgment, and the destruction of the present constitution of our globe. When, in reference to these events, it is said, "that the stars shall fall from heaven," that "the powers of heaven shall be shaken," and that "the earth and the heaven shall flee away," our knowledge of the system of nature leads us to conclude, either that such expressions are merely metaphorical, or that they describe only the *appearance*, not the *reality* of things. For it is impossible that the stars can ever fall to the earth, since each of them is of a size vastly superior to our globe, and could never be attracted to its surface, without unhinging the laws and the fabric of universal nature. The *appearance*, however, of the "heaven fleeing away," would be produced, should the earth's diurnal rotation, at that period, be suddenly stopped, as will most probable happen; in which case, all nature in this sublunary system, would be thrown into confusion, and the heavens, with all their host, would *appear* to flee away.

Now, the scientific student of Scripture alone can judiciously apply the canon to which I have adverted; he alone can appreciate its utility in the interpretation of the sacred

oracles; for he knows the facts which the philosopher and the astronomer have ascertained to exist in the system of nature; from the want of which information, many divines, whose comments on Scripture have, in other respects, been judicious, have displayed their ignorance, and fallen into egregious blunders, when attempting to explain the first chapters of Genesis, and several parts of the book of Job, which have tended to bring discredit on the oracles of heaven.

II.—*The System of Nature Confirms and Illustrates the Scriptural Doctrine of the* Depravity *of* Man.

In the preceding parts of this volume, I have stated several striking instances of Divine benevolence, which appear in the construction of the organs of the animal system, in the constitution of the earth, the waters, and the atmosphere, and in the *variety* of beauties and sublimities which adorn the face of nature; all which proclaim, in language which can scarcely be mistaken, that the Creator has a special regard to the happiness of his creatures.—Yet the Scriptures uniformly declare, that man has fallen from his primeval state of innocence, and has violated the laws of his Maker; that "his heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and that "destruction and misery are in his ways." Observation and experience also demonstrate, that a moral disease pervades the whole human family, from the most savage to the most civilized tribes of mankind; which has displayed its virulence in those wars and devastations which have, in all ages, convulsed the world; and which daily displays itself in those acts of injustice, fraud, oppression, malice, tyranny, and cruelty, which are perpetrated in every country, and among all the ranks even of civilized life. That a world inhabited by moral agents of this description would display, in its physical constitution, certain indications of its Creator's displeasure, is what we should naturally expect, from a consideration of those attributes of his nature with which we are acquainted. Accordingly, we find, that, amidst all the evidences of benevolence which our globe exhibits, there are not wanting, certain displays of "the wrath of Heaven against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," in order to arouse them to a sense of their guilt, and to inspire them with reverence and awe of that Being whom they have offended. The following facts, among many others, may be considered as corroborating this position.

In the first place, *the present state of the interior strata of*

the earth may be considered as a presumptive evidence, that a moral revolution has taken place since man was placed upon the globe. When we penetrate into the interior recesses of the earth, we find its different strata bent into the most irregular forms; sometimes lying horizontally, sometimes projecting upwards, and sometimes downwards, and thrown into confusion; as if some dreadful concussion had spread its ravages through every part of the solid crust of our globe. This is visible in every region of the earth. Wherever the miner penetrates among his subterraneous recesses, wherever he fissures and caverns of the earth are explored, and wherever the mountains lay bare their rugged cliffs, the marks of ruin, convulsion, and disorder meet the eye of the beholder. Evidences of these facts are to be found in the records of all intelligent travellers and geologists who have visited Alpine districts, or explored the subterraneous regions of the earth; of which I have already stated a few instances, in the article of *Geology*, pp. 160, 165, 166.—These facts seem evidently to indicate that the earth is not now in the same state in which it originally proceeded from the hand of its Creator; for such a scene of disruption and derangement appears incompatible with that order, harmony and beauty which are apparent in the other departments of nature. We dare not assert, that such terrible convulsions took place by chance, or independent of the will of the Creator; nor dare we insinuate, that they were the effects of a random display of Almighty Power; and, therefore, we are necessarily led to infer, that a *moral* cause, connected with the conduct of the rational inhabitants of the globe, must have existed, to warrant so awful an interposition of Divine Power; for the fate of the animated beings which then peopled the earth, was involved in the consequences which must have attended this terrible catastrophe. The volume of Revelation on this point, concurs with the deductions of reason, and assigns a cause adequate to warrant the production of such an extraordinary effect. "The wickedness of man was GREAT upon the earth; the earth was FILLED WITH VIOLENCE; every purpose and desire of man's heart was ONLY EVIL CONTINUALLY." Man had frustrated the end of his existence; the earth was turned into a habitation of demons; the long period to which his life was protracted, only served to harden him in his wickedness, and to enable him to carry his diabolical schemes to their utmost extent, till the social state of the human race became a scene of unmixed depravity and misery. And the physical effects of the punishment of this universal defection from God, are

presented to our view in every land, and will remain to all ages, as a visible memorial that man has rebelled against the authority of his Maker.

2. *The existence of Volcanoes, and the terrible ravages they produce*, bear testimony to the state of man as a depraved intelligence. A volcano is a mountain, generally of an immense size, from whose summit issue fire, smoke, sulphur, and torrents of melted lava. (see p. 141.) Previous to an eruption, the smoke, which is continually ascending from the *crater*, or opening in the top, increases and shoots up to an immense height; forked lightning issues from the ascending column; showers of ashes are thrown out to the distance of forty or fifty miles; volleys of red hot stones are discharged to a great height in the air; the sky appears thick and dark; the luminaries of heaven disappear; and these terrible forebodings are accompanied with thunder, lightning, frequent concussions of the earth, and dreadful subterraneous bellowings. When these alarming appearances have continued sometimes four or five months, the lava begins to make its appearance, either boiling over the top, or forcing its way through the side of the mountain. This fiery deluge of melted minerals rolls down the declivity of the mountain, forming a dismal flaming stream, sometimes fourteen miles long, six miles broad, and 200 feet deep. In its course, it destroys orchards, vineyards, cornfields, and villages; and sometimes cities, containing twenty thousand inhabitants, have been swallowed up and consumed. Several other phenomena, of awful sublimity, sometimes accompany these eruptions. In the eruption of Vesuvius, in 1794, a shock of an earthquake was felt; and, at the same instant, a fountain of bright fire, attended with the blackest smoke, and a loud report, was seen to issue, and to rise to a great height from the cone of the mountain; and was soon succeeded by fifteen other fiery fountains, all in a direct line, extending for a mile and a half downwards. This fiery scene was accompanied with the loudest thunder, the incessant reports of which, like those of a numerous heavy artillery, were attended by a continued hollow murmur, similar to that of the roaring of the ocean during a violent storm. The houses in Naples, at seven miles' distance, were for several hours in a constant tremor; the bells ringing, and doors and windows incessantly rattling and shaking. The murmur of the prayers and lamentations of a numerous population added to the horrors of the scene. All travellers, who have witnessed these eruptions, seem to be at a loss to find words sufficiently emphatic to

express the terrors of the scene. "One cannot form a juster idea," says Bishop BERKLEY, "of the *noise* emitted by the mountain, than by imagining a mixed sound made up of the raging of a tempest, the murmur of a troubled sea, and the roaring of thunder and artillery, confused altogether. Though we heard this at the distance of twelve miles, yet it was *very terrible*." In 1744, the flames of Cotopaxi, in South America, rose 3,000 feet above the brink of the crater, and its roarings were heard at the distance of *six hundred miles*. "At the port of Guayaquil, 150 miles distant from the crater," says Humboldt, "we heard, day and night, the noise of this volcano, like continued discharges of a battery, and we distinguished these tremendous sounds even on the Pacific ocean."

The *ravages* produced by volcanoes are in proportion to the terror they inspire. In the eruption of Etna, in 1669, the stream of lava destroyed, in 40 days, the habitations of 27,000 persons; and, of 20,000 inhabitants of the city of Catania, only 3,000 escaped. In the year 79, the celebrated cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum were completely overwhelmed and buried under ground by an eruption of Vesuvius, and the spots on which they stood remained unknown for 1600 years. Since that period, about 40 eruptions have taken place, each of them producing the most dreadful ravages. But the volcanoes of Asia and America are still more terrible and destructive than those of Europe. The volcanic mountain Pichinca, near Quito, caused, on one occasion, the destruction of 35,000 inhabitants. In the year 1772, an eruption of a mountain in the island of Java, destroyed 40 villages, and several thousands of the inhabitants; and in October, 1822, eighty-eight hamlets, and above 2000 persons, were destroyed in the same island, by a sudden eruption from a new volcano. The eruption of Tomboro, in the island of Sumbawa, in 1815, was so dreadful, that all the Moluccas, Java, Sumatra, and Borneo, to the distance of a thousand miles from the mountain, felt tremulous motions, and heard the report of explosions. In Java, at the distance of 340 miles, the clouds of ashes from the volcano produced utter darkness.

Volcanoes are more numerous than is generally imagined They are to be found in every quarter of the world, from the icy shores of Kamtschatka to the mountains of Patagonia. Humboldt enumerates 40 volcanoes constantly burning, between Cotopaxi and the Pacific Ocean; 20 have been observed in the chain of mountains that stretches along Kamtschatka; and many of them are to be seen in the Phillippines, the Moluccas, the Cape de Verd, the Sandwich, the Ladrone, and

other islands in the Indian and Pacific oceans. It is stated in vol. 6th of *Sup. to Ency. Brit.* lately published, that about 205 volcanoes are known, including only those which have been active within a period to which history or tradition reaches. Europe contains 14; and, of the whole number, it is computed, that 107 are in islands, and 98 on the great continents.

Can we then suppose, that so many engines of terror and destruction, dispersed over every quarter of the globe, are consistent with the conduct of a benevolent Creator towards an *innocent* race of men? If so, we must either admit that the Creator had it not in his power, when arranging our terrestrial system, to prevent the occasional action of these dreadful ravagers, or, that he is indifferent to the happiness of his innocent offspring. The former admission is inconsistem with the idea of his Omnipotence, and the latter, with the idea of his universal Benevolence. It is not, therefore, enthusiasm, but the fairest deduction of reason to conclude, that they are indications of God's displeasure against a race of transgressors who have apostatized from his laws.

3. The same reasoning will apply to the ravages produced by *earthquakes*. Next to volcanoes, earthquakes are the most terrific phenomena of nature, and are even far more destructive to man, and to the labors of his hands. An earthquake, which consists in a sudden motion of the earth, is generally preceded by a rumbling sound, sometimes like that of a number of carriages driving furiously along the pavement of a street, sometimes like the rushing noise of a mighty wind, and sometimes like the explosions of artillery. Their effect on the surface of the earth is various. Sometimes it is instantaneously heaved up in a perpendicular direction, and sometimes it assumes a kind of rolling motion, from side to side.—The ravages which earthquakes have produced, are terrible beyond description; and are accomplished almost in a moment. In 1692, the city of Port-Royal, in Jamaica, was destroyed by an earthquake, in the space of two minutes, and the houses sunk into a gulph forty fathoms deep. In 1693, an earthquake happened in Sicily, which either destroyed, or greatly damaged, fifty-four cities, and an incredible number of villages. The city of Catania was utterly overthrown: the sea all of a sudden began to roar; mount Etna to send forth immense spires of flame; and immediately a shock ensued, as if all the artillery in the world had been discharged. The birds flew about astonished; the sun was darkened; the beasts ran howling from the hills; a dark cloud of dust covered the air;

and, though the shock did not last three minutes, yet nineteen thousand of the inhabitants of the city perished in the ruins. This shock extended to a circumference of 7000 miles.

Earthquakes have been producing their ravages in various parts of the world, and in every age. Pliny informs us, that 12 cities in Asia Minor were swallowed up in one night. In the year 115, the city of Antioch, and a great part of the adjacent country, were buried by an earthquake. About 300 years after, it was again destroyed, along with 40,000 inhabitants; and, after an interval of only 60 years, it was a third time overturned, with the loss of not less than 60,000 souls. In 1755, Lisbon was destroyed by an earthquake, and it buried under its ruins above 50,000 inhabitants. The effects of this terrible earthquake were felt over the greater part of Europe and Africa, and even in the midst of the Atlantic ocean; and are calculated to have extended over a space of not less than four millions of square miles. In August, 1822, two-thirds of the city of Aleppo, which contained 40,000 houses, and 200,000 inhabitants, were destroyed by an earthquake, and nearly thirty thousand inhabitants were buried under the ruins. —To suppose that the human beings who have been victims to the ravages of earthquakes and volcanoes, "were sinners above all those who dwelt around them," would be the height of impiety and presumption. But, the fact that thousands of rational beings have been swept from existence, in a manner so horrible and tremendous, seems plainly to indicate, that they belonged to a race of apostate intelligences, who had violated the commands of their Creator. Such visitations are quite accordant to the idea of man being in the condition of a transgressor; but, if he were an *innocent* creature, they would be altogether unaccountable, as happening under the government of a Being of unbounded benevolence.

4. The phenomena of *thunder-storms*, *tempests*, *and hurricanes*, and the ravages they produce, are also presumptive proofs that man is a depraved intelligence. In that season of the year when Nature is arrayed in her most beautiful attire, and the whole terrestrial landscape tends to inspire the mind with cheerfulness—suddenly a sable cloud emerges from the horizon—the sky assumes a baleful aspect—a dismal gloom envelopes the face of nature—the lightnings flash from one end of the horizon to another—the thunders roll with awful majesty along the verge of heaven, till at length they burst over head in tremendous explosions. The sturdy oak is shattered and despoiled of its foliage; rocks are rent into shivers;

and the grazing herds are struck into a lifeless group. Even *man* is not exempted from danger in the midst of this appalling scene. For hundreds in every age have fallen victims either to the direct stroke of the lightning, or to the concussions and conflagrations with which it has been attended. In tropical countries, the phenomena of thunder-storms are more dreadful and appalling, than in our temperate climate. The thunder frequently continues for days and weeks in almost one incessant roar; the rains are poured down in torrents; and the flashes of lightning follow each other in so rapid a succession, that the whole atmosphere and the surrounding hills seem to be in a blaze. In some instances, the most dreadful effects have been produced by the bursting of an electrical cloud. In 1772, a bright cloud was observed at midnight to cover a mountain in the Island of Java; it emitted globes of fire so luminous, that the night became as clear as day. Its effects were astonishing. Every thing was destroyed for 7 leagues round; houses were demolished; plantations buried in the earth; and 2140 people lost their lives, besides 1500 head of cattle, and a vast number of horses and other animals. —*Ency. Brit.*—Art. *Cloud.*

Is it not reasonable, then, to conclude, that such awful phenomena as storms, volcanoes, and earthquakes, are so many occasional indications of the frown of an offended Creator upon a race of transgressors, in order to arouse them to a sense of their apostacy from the God of heaven? We cannot conceive that such physical operations, accompanied by so many terrific and destructive effects, are at all compatible with the idea that man is at present in a *paradisiacal* state, and possessed of that moral purity in which he was created. Such appaling displays of Almighty power are in complete unison with the idea, that man is a trangressor, and that the present dispensations of God are a mixture of mercy and of judgment; but if he belong to an innocent race of moral intelligences, they appear quite anomalous, and are altogether inexplicable, on the supposition, that a Being of infinite benevolence and rectitude directs the operations of the physical and moral world; more especially when we consider the admirable care which is displayed in the construction of animal bodies, in order to prevent pain, and to produce pleasurable sensations. When man was first brought into existence, his thoughts and affections, we must suppose, were in unison with the will of his Creator; his mind was serene and unruffled; and, consequently, no foreboding apprehensions of danger would, in such a state, take possession of his breast. But after he had

swerved from the path of primeval rectitude, and especially after the Deluge had swept away the inhabitants of the Antediluvian world, the constitution of the earth and the atmosphere seems to have undergone a mighty change, corresponding to the degraded state into which he had fallen; so that those very elements which may have formerly ministered to his enjoyment—by being formed into different combinations—now conspire to produce terror and destruction.

The same important conclusion might have been deduced, from a consideration of the immense deserts of marshes and barren sands which are dispersed over the globe—the vast and frightful regions of ice around the poles—the position of the mineral strata, and the vast disproportion which the extent of the dry land bears to the expanse of the ocean—all which circumstances, and many others, in conjunction with the facts above-stated, conspire to show, that man no longer stands in the rank of a pure intelligence; and that his habitation corresponds, in some degree, to his state of moral degradation. By overlooking this consideration, St. Pierre, and other naturalists have found themselves much at a loss, when attempting to vindicate the wisdom and equity of Providence, in the physical disorders which exist in the present constitution of our globe. The circumstance, that man is a fallen creature, appears the only clue to guide us in unravelling the mysteries of Providence, and to enable us to perceive the *harmony* and *consistency* of the Divine operations in the system of nature; and no other consideration will fully account for the disorders which exist in the present economy of our world.

But, it is a most consoling consideration, that, amidst all the physical evils which abound, the benevolence and mercy of God are admirably blended with the indications of his displeasure. Thunder-storms and tempests contribute to the purification of the atmosphere; and volcanoes are converted into funnels for vomiting up those fiery materials which produce earthquakes, and which might otherwise swallow up whole provinces in one mighty gulf. In the *ordinary course* of things, such phenomena are more terrific than destructive; and are calculated rather to rouse an unthinking world to consideration, than to prove the instruments of human destruction. Compared with the miseries which men have voluntarily inflicted on one another, the destructive effects of the elements of nature dwindle into mere temporary and trifling accidents. We have reason to believe, that a much greater destruction of human beings has been produced by two or three of the late battles in modern Europe, such as those of Waterloo,

Borodina, and Smolensko, than has been produced by all the electrical storms, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, which have raged for the space of a hundred years. It has been calculated, that during the Russian campaign of 1812, including men, women, and children, belonging to the French and Russians, there were not less than five hundred thousand human victims sacrificed to the demon of war. It is probable, that the destruction produced among the human race, by the convulsions of nature, since the commencement of time, (the deluge only excepted,) does not amount to above four or five millions of lives; but were we to take into account the destruction of human life produced by ambition, tyranny, oppression, superstition, wars, devastations, murders, and horrid cruelties, in every period of the world, it would, doubtless, amount to several hundreds of millions. So that, amidst the most terrible displays of the displeasure of God against the sins of men, *mercy* is mingled with judgment; and while man is the greatest enemy and destroyer of his own species, benevolence is the *prominent* feature of all the arrangements of the Deity in the physical world. For "his tender mercies are over all his works."*

III.—*The discoveries which have been made in the system of nature, illustrate the doctrine of the* Resurrection of the Dead.

The doctrine of a Resurrection from the dead, at first view, appears to involve in it a variety of difficulties, and apparent contradictions. That a complex organical machine, as the human body is, consisting of thousands of diversified parts for the performance of its functions, after it has been reduced to atoms, and those atoms dispersed to "the four winds of heaven"—should be again reared up with the same materials, in a new and more glorious form—is an idea which seems to baffle the human comprehension; and, in all probability, would never have entered the mind of man, had it not been communicated by Divine Revelation. Accordingly we find, that the philosophers of antiquity, though many of them believed in the doctrine of a future state, never once dreamed, that the bodies of men, after they had been committed to the dust,

* The facts stated in this section are expressed, for the most part in the author's own words, for the sake of compression.—His authorities are, Goldsmith's "Natural Hist.," Humboldt's "Travels," Brydon's, "Tour," Sir W. Hamilton's "Observations," Raffles' "History of Java," *Ency. Brit.* Art. *Etna, Volcano, Earthquake, Antioch, Cloud;* The Literary and Scientific Journals for 1822, &c.

would ever again be reanimated ; and hence, when the Apostle Paul proposed this doctrine to the Athenian philosophers, they scouted the idea, as if it had been the reverie of a madman. And, indeed, without a strong conviction, and a lively impression of the infinite power and intelligence of God, the mind cannot rely with unshaken confidence on the declaration of a future fact so widely different from all the obvious phenomena of nature, and from every thing that lies within the range of human experience. "If a man die," says Job, "shall he live again? There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away ; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" When the mind, however, is frequently exercised in contemplations on the stupendous works of the Almighty, it must feel an impressive conviction, that "nothing can be too hard for Jehovah." When we endeavor to draw aside the veil which conceals many of the scenes of nature from the vulgar eye, we perceive a variety of operations and analogies, which tend to assist us in forming a conception, not only of the *possibility* of a resurrection, but also of the *manner* in which it may probably be effected, when the power of Omnipotence is interposed.

The transformations of insects afford us a beautiful illustration of this subject. All the butterflies which we see fluttering about in the summer months, were originally caterpillars. Before they arrive at that highest stage of their existence, they pass through four different transformations. The first state of a butterfly is that of an *egg ;* it next assumes the form of a loathsome crawling *worm ;* after remaining some time in this state, it throws off its caterpillar skin ; languishes ; refuses to eat ; ceases to move ; and is shut up, as it were, in a tomb. In this state, the animal is termed a *chrysalis ;* it is covered with a thin crust or shell, and remains, sometimes for six or eight months, without motion, and apparently without life. After remaining its allotted time in this torpid condition, it begins to acquire new life and vigor ; it bursts its imprisonment, and comes forth a butterfly, with wings tinged with the most beautiful colors. It mounts the air ; it ranges from flower to flower, and seems to rejoice in its new and splendid existence. How very different does it appear in this state from what it did in the proceding stages of its existence ! How unlikely did it seem that a rough, hairy, *crawling* worm, which lay for such a length of time in a death-like torpor, and enshrouded in a tomb, should be re-animated, as it were, and changed into so beautiful a form, and endued with such powers of rapid motion !

Perhaps the change to be effected on the bodies of men, at the general resurrection, may not be greater, nor more wonderful in its nature, than are the changes which take place from the first to the last stage of a caterpillar's existence. In such transformations, then, we behold a lively representation of the death and resurrection of a righteous man. "A little while he shall lie in the ground, as the seed lies in the bosom of the earth; but he shall be raised again, and shall never die any more."

There is another illustration, taken from a consideration of the chemical changes of matter, which has a still more direct bearing on the doctrine of a resurrection. We know, that substances which are invisibly incorporated with air, water, and other fluids, and which seem to be destroyed, may be made to re-appear in their original form by the application of certain chemical re-agents. For example; put a small piece of solid camphor into a phial half-filled with alcohol or spirits of wine; in a short time the camphor will be dissolved in the fluid, and the spirit will be as transparent as at first. If water be now added, it will unite with the ardent spirit, and the camphor will be separated and fall to the bottom of the phial. In this way the camphor may be nearly all recovered as at first; and, by distillation, the alcohol may also be separated from the water, and exhibited in a separate state. I have already noticed, that *Carbon*, which forms an essential part of all animal and vegetable substances, is found to be not only indestructible by age, but in all its combinations, which are infinitely diversified, it still preserves its *identity*. In the state of carbonic acid it exists in union with earths and stones in unbounded quantities; and though buried for thousands of years beneath immense rocks, or in the centre of mountains, it is still carbonic acid; for no sooner is it disengaged from its dormitory than it rises with all the life and vigor of recent formation, not in the least impaired by its torpid inactivity during a lapse of ages. The beams of the theatre at Herculaneum were converted into *charcoal* (which is one of the compounds of Carbon) by the lava which overflowed that city, during an eruption of Mount Vesuvius; and during the lapse of 1700 years, the charcoal has remained as entire as if it had been formed but yesterday, and it will probably continue so to the end of the world. In addition to these facts it may be stated, that provision has been made for the restoration of the fallen leaves of vegetables which rot upon the ground, and, to a careless observer, would appear to be lost forever. It has been shown by experiment, that whenever the soil becomes

charged with such matter, the oxygen of the atmosphere combines with it, and converts it into carbonic acid gas. The consequence of which is, that *this very same carbon* is, in process of time, absorbed by a new race of vegetables, which it clothes with a new foliage, and which is itself destined to undergo similar putrefaction and renovation to the end of time."*

These facts, and others of a similar description which might have been stated, demonstrate, that one of the constituent parts of animal bodies remains unalterably the same, amidst all the revolutions of time, and all the changes and decompositions which take place in the system of nature; and, consequently, that though human bodies may remain in a state of putrefaction for ages, in the earth and in the waters, yet their component parts remain unchanged, and in readiness to enter into a new and more glorious combination, at the command of that INTELLIGENCE to whom all the principles of nature and all their diversified changes are intimately known; and whose POWER is able to direct their combinations to the accomplishment of his purposes.—Though such considerations as these may have no weight on certain unreflecting minds, that never meet with any difficulties in the economy either of Nature or of Redemption; yet, the man of deep reflection, who has frequently had his mind distracted with the apparent improbability of the accomplishment of certain Divine Declarations, will joyfully embrace such facts in the economy of nature, as a *sensible support* to his faith in the promises of his God; and will resign his body to dust and putrefaction, in the firm hope of emerging from the tomb to a future and more glorious transformation.

IV. *The discoveries of Science tend to illustrate the doctrine of the* GENERAL CONFLAGRATION.

We are informed, in the Sacred Oracles, that a period is approaching, when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." Science has ascertained certain facts in the constitution of nature, which lead us to form some conception of the *manner* in which this awful catastrophe may probably be effected, and also of the ease with which it may be accomplished, when the destined period shall have arrived. It was formerly stated, (pp. 73, 223,) that the atmosphere, or the air we breathe, is a compound substance, composed of two very

* Parkes' "Chem. Catechism," p. 266, and the *additional notes.*

different and opposite principles, termed *oxygen* and *nitrogen*. The oxygen, which forms about a fifth part of the atmosphere, is now ascertained to be the principle of flame; a lighted taper immersed in this gas, burns with a brilliancy too great for the eye to bear; and even a rod of iron or steel is made to blaze under its energy.

The modern infidel, like the scoffers of old, scouts the idea of the dissolution of the world, and of the restitution of the universe, "because all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation; not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God;" and not considering the principles and facts in the system of nature, which indicate the possibility of such an event. But, from the fact now stated, we may learn, how easily this effect may be accomplished, even in conformity with those laws which now operate in the constitution of our globe. For should the Creator issue forth his Almighty Fiat —"Let the nitrogen of the atmosphere be completely separated from the oxygen, and let the oxygen exert its native energies without control, wherever it extends;"—from what we know of its nature, we are warranted to conclude, that instantly a universal conflagration would commence throughout all the kingdoms of nature—not only wood, coals, sulphur, bitumen, and other combustible substances, but even the hardest rocks and stones, and all the metals, fossils, and minerals, and water itself, which is a compound of two inflammable substances, would blaze with a rapidity which would carry destruction through the whole expanse of the terraqueous globe, and change its present aspect into that of a new world:—at the same time, all the other laws of nature might still operate as they have hitherto done since the creation of the world.

I do not mean positively to assert, that this is the agent which the Almighty will certainly employ for accomplishing this terrible catastrophe, (though we think it highly probable,) since Infinite Power is possessed of numerous resources for accomplishing its objects, which lie beyond the sphere of our knowledge and comprehension. But I have brought forward this fact, to show with what infinite ease this event may be accomplished, when Almighty Power is interposed. By means of the knowledge we have acquired of the constitution of the atmosphere, and by the aid of chemical apparatus, we can perform experiments on a *small scale*, similar in kind, though infinitely inferior in degree, to the awful event under consideration. And, therefore, we can easily conceive that He who formed the expansive atmosphere which surrounds us, and

who knows the native energy of its constituent principles, may, by a simple volition, make that invisible fluid, in a few moments, the cause of the destruction of the present constitution of our world, and, at the same time, the means of its subsequent renovation. For as fire does not annihilate, but only changes the forms of matter, this globe on which we now tread, and which bears the marks of ruin and disruption in several parts of its structure, may come forth from the flames of the general conflagration, purified from all its physical evils, adorned with new beauties and sublimities, and rendered a fit habitation for pure intelligences, either of our own species or of another order. For, though the "heavens," or the atmosphere, "shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat;" "yet," says the Apostle Peter, "we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Whether, after being thus renovated, it shall be allotted as the residence of the redeemed inhabitants of our world, is beyond our province at present to determine. But if not, it will, in all probability, be allotted as the abode of other rational beings, who may be transported from other regions, to contemplate a new province of the Divine empire, or who may be immediately created for the purpose of taking possession of this renovated world. For we have reason to believe, that the energies of Creating Power will be continually exerted, in replenishing the boundless universe, throughout all the ages of infinite duration, and that no substances, or worlds which God has created, will ever be suffered to fall into annihilation—at least, that the original atoms of matter will never be destroyed, whatever new forms they may assume, and however varied the combinations into which they may enter.

The above are only a few examples out of many which were intended to be specified, of the illustrations which the system of nature affords of the doctrines and facts of Revelation, but the narrow limits of this volume prevent further enlargement.

It was also intended to follow up the preceding discussions with particular illustrations of the following topics:—The views which science affords of the *incessant energies of Creating Power*—the changes and revolutions which appear to have happened, and which are still going on in the distant regions of the universe, *as tending to amplify our views of the grand and multifarious objects over which Divine Providence presides—the connection of science with a future state*—the aids which the discoveries of science afford, in enabling us to

form a conception of the scenes of future felicity—of the employments of the heavenly inhabitants, and of their perpetual advances in knowledge and happiness, and in their views of the perfections of Deity—the *moral relations of intelligent beings* to their Creator, and to each other; and the *physical grounds* or *reasons* of those moral laws which the Deity has promulgated for regulating the conduct, and for promoting the harmony and order of intelligent agents—illustrations of the allusions of the Sacred writers to the system of the material world—the *simultaneous progress of science and religion*, considered as an evidence of the connection of the one with the other—the *moral effects* of the study of science in connection with religion—replies to objections and insinuations which have been thrown out against the idea of combining the discoveries of Science with the discoveries of revelation, &c. But, as illustrations of these, and various other topics connected with them, would occupy two or three hundred pages, they must, in the mean time, be postponed.*

* A work, embracing illustrations of some of the topics here stated, is preparing for the press, under the title of "*The Philosophy of Religion;*" or, an Illustration of the Moral Laws of the Universe, on the principles of Reason and Divine Revelation." In this work, an original, and, at the same time, a popular train of thought will be prosecuted, and the different topics will be enlivened with illustrative facts, borrowed from the scenery of nature and the moral history of mankind.

CHAPTER V.

BENEFICIAL EFFECTS WHICH MIGHT RESULT TO CHRISTIAN SOCIETY FROM CONNECTING THE DISCOVERIES OF SCIENCE WITH THE OBJECTS OF RELIGION.

I.—THE VARIETY OF TOPICS *which would be introduced into Christian Instructions, by connecting them with the manifestations of Deity in the System of Nature,* WOULD HAVE A TENDENCY TO ALLURE THE ATTENTION OF THE YOUNG TO RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS, *and to afford Mental Entertainment, and Moral Instruction to intelligent minds of every description.*

NOVELTY and VARIETY appear to be essentially requisite in order to rouse the attention, not only of the more ignorant but even of the more intelligent class of mankind, and to excite them to make progress in the path of intellectual and moral improvement. The principle of *curiosity*, which appears at a very early period of life, and which variegated scenery and novel objects tend to stimulate and to gratify—so far from being checked and decried, in a religious point of view, as some have been disposed to do, ought to be encouraged and cultivated in the minds both of the old and of the young. As it is a principle which God himself has implanted in our natures, for wise and important purposes, it requires only to be chastened, and directed in a proper channel, in order to become one of the most powerful auxiliaries in the cause of religion, and of intellectual improvement. To gratify this principle, and to increase its activity, the Creator has adorned our globe with a combination of beauties and sublimities, strewed in endless variety over all its different regions. The hills and dales, the mountains and plains; the seas, the lakes, the rivers, the islands of every form and size which diversify the surface of the ocean; the bays, the gulfs, and peninsulas; the forests, the groves, the deep dells, and towering cliffs; the infinite variety of trees, plants, flowers and vegetable productions of every

hue, so profusely scattered over the face of Nature; the diversified productions of the mineral kingdom; the variegated coloring spread over the face of nature; together with the many thousands of different species of animated beings which traverse the air, the waters, and the earth—afford so many stimuli to rouse this principle into exercise, and to direct the mind to the contemplation of the Creator. And as the earth displays an endless diversity of objects, so the heavens, in so far as they have been explored, exhibit a scenery both grand and variegated. There is not a planet in the Solar System but differs from another, in its magnitude, in its distance from the central luminary about which it revolves, in the velocity of its motion, in the extent of the circle it describes around the sun, in the period of time in which its revolution is completed, in its rotation round its axis, in the number of moons with which it is attended, in the inclination of its axis to the plane of its orbit, and the diversity of seasons which results from this circumstance; in the density of its atmosphere, and the various appearances which diversify its surface. And if we were favored with a nearer view of these majestic orbs, we should, doubtless, behold a similar variety in every part of their inter nal arrangements.—The surface of the moon presents a variegated prospect of mountains and vales, but so very different in their form, position, and arrangement, from what obtains, on the surface of our globe, that it would exhibit a scenery altogether new and uncommon to an inhabitant of this world, were he placed on the surface of that planet. Every comet, too, is distinguished from another, by its magnitude, the extent of its atmosphere, the length of its blazing tail, the rapidity of its motion, and the figure of the curve it describes around the sun. With regard to the fixed stars which are distributed, of every size, and in every direction, through the immensity of space, our senses, as well as the declaration of an inspired writer, convince us, that, in point of brilliancy, color, and magnitude, "one star differeth from another star in glory."

And as the system of Nature in all its parts presents a boundless variety of scenery, to arouse the attention, and to gratify the desire for novelty, so the Revelation of God contained in the Sacred Records, displays a diversified combination of the most sublime and interesting subjects and events. Were we to form an opinion of the compass of Divine Revelation, from the range of subjects to which the minds of some professing Christians are confined, it might all be comprehended within the limits of five or six chapters of the New Testament; and all the rest might be thrown aside, as a dead-

weight upon the Christian System. But here, as in all the other displays of the Almighty, Divine Perfection and Providence are exhibited in the most diversified aspects. Here we have recorded a history of the creation and arrangement of our globe,—of the formation of the first human pair,—of their primeval innocence, temptation and fall,—of the arts which were cultivated in the first ages of the world,—of the increase of human wickedness,—of the building of the ark,—of the drowning of the world by a universal deluge,—of the burning of Sodom by fire from the clouds,—of the origin of languages,—of the dividing of the Red Sea,—of the journeying of the tribes of Israel through the deserts of Arabia,—of their conquest of the promised land, and their wars with the nations of Canaan,—of the corporeal translation of Elijah from earth to heaven,—of the manifestation of the Son of God in human flesh, the benevolent miracles he performed, and the triumphs he obtained over all the powers of hell and earth. We are here presented with the most interesting and affecting narratives, elegies, dramatic poems, and triumphal songs,—with views of society in the earliest ages of the world, when the lives of men were prolonged to nearly a thousand years,—with splendid miracles performed in the land of Egypt, in the wilderness of Horeb, and in the "field of Zoan," when "the sun and moon stood still in their habitation;" when the waters of the great deep were divided, and mountains shook and trembled "at the presence of Jehovah,"—with the glorious marching of a whole nation through the Arabian deserts, under the guidance of a miraculous pillar of clouds and fire,—with the visits of celestial messengers, and the visible symbols of "a present Deity,"—with prophetical delineations of the present and future condition of the race of Adam,—with descriptions of the Power, Wisdom, Love, and Majesty of the Almighty, and of his operations in Heaven and Earth,—with the results and bearings of the Economy of Redemption,—with Divine Songs, Odes and Hymns, composed by angels and inspired men,—with maxims of moral wisdom, examples of sublime eloquence, of strength of reasoning, and of manly boldness of reproof,—with Proverbs, Parables, Allegories, Exhortations, Promises, Threatenings, and Consolatory addresses. In short, we have here detailed, in the greatest variety—History, Antiquities, Voyages, Travels, Philosophy, Geography, Natural and Moral Science, Biography, Arts, Epic Poetry, Epistles, Memoirs, Delineations of Nature, Sketches of Human Character, Moral Precepts, Prophecies, Miracles, Narrations, Wonderful Providences, Marvellous Deliverances, the Pho-

nomena of the Air, the Waters, and the Earth; the Past, the Present, and the Future Scenes of the World—all blended together in one harmonious system, without artificial order, but with a majesty and grandeur corresponding to the style of all the other Works of God,—and all calculated to gratify the principle of curiosity—to convey "reproof, correction, and instruction, in righteousness," and "to make the Man of God perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every good work."

And, as the scenes of Nature, and the scenes of Revelation, are thus wonderfully diversified, in order to excite the attention of intelligent beings, and to gratify the desire for variety, so we have every reason to believe, that the scenes, objects, and dispensations, which will be be displayed in the heavenly world, will be incomparably more grand and diversi fied. When we consider the immensity of God's Universal Kingdom, and the numerous systems, and worlds, and beings comprehended within its vast circumference, and that the energies of Creating Power may be forever exerted in raising new worlds into existence—we may rest assured, that the desire of variety and of novelty, in holy intelligences, will be completely gratified throughout an endless succession of existence; and that the most luxuriant imagination, in its boldest excursions, can never go beyond the reality of those scenes of diversified grandeur which the Heaven of heavens will display.

Now, since the book of Nature, and the Book of Revelation, since all the manifestations of the Creator in heaven and earth are characterized by their sublime and diversified aspect; we would ask, why should we not be imitators of God, in displaying the diversified grandeur of his kingdom of Providence and of Grace, before the minds of those whom we profess to instruct? Why should we confine our views to a few points in the Christian system, to a few stones in the fabric of the Divine operations, when "a wide and unbounded prospect lies before us?" Why should we not rather attempt to rouse the moral and intellectual energies of mankind, from the pulpit, from the press, in the school-room, and in the family circle, by exhibiting the boundless variety of aspect which the Revelations of Heaven present, and the holy tendencies of devout contemplation on the Works and the Ways of God? that they may learn, with intelligence, to "meditate on *all* the works of the Lord, and to talk of *all* his doings."—By enlarging and diversifying the topics of religious discussion, according to the views now stated, we have it in our power to spread out an intellectual feast to allure and to gratify every variety of taste, the young and the old, the learned and the unlearned; yea

even the careless and the ignorant, the sceptical and the dissipated, might frequently be allured by the selection of a judicious variety of striking and impressive objects and descriptions, to partake of those mental enjoyments which might ultimately issue in the happiest results. The man of an inquisitive turn of mind, who now throws aside every thing that has the appearance of religion, on account of its dulness might have his curiosity gratified amidst such a variety as that to which I allude; and, from perceiving the bearing of every discussion on the great realities of religion and a future state, might be led to more serious inquiries after the path that leads to immortality. In a word, to associate and to amalgamate, as it were, the arts and sciences, and every department of useful knowledge, with divine subjects, is to consecrate them to their original and legitimate ends, and to present religion to the eyes of men, in its most sublime, and comprehensive, and attractive form, corresponding to what appears to be the design of the Creator, in all the manifestations he has given of himself, in the System of Nature, in the Operations of Providence, and in the Economy of Redemption.

II.—*By connecting Science with Religion, Christians would be enabled to take* AN EXTENSIVE SURVEY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

How very narrow and limited are the views of most professors of religion respecting the universal Kingdom of Jehovah, and the range of his operations! The views of some individuals are confined chiefly within the limits of their own parish, or at farthest, extend only to the blue mountains that skirt their horizon, and form the boundary of their sight. Within this narrow circle, all their ideas of God, of religion, and of the relations of intelligent beings to each other, are chiefly confined. There are others, who form an extensive class of our population, whose ideas are confined nearly to to the county in which they reside, and to the adjacent districts; and there are few, comparatively, whose views extend beyond the confines of the kingdom to which they belong—though the whole island in which we reside is less than the two thousandth part of the globe we inhabit. Of the vast extent of this earthly ball, of its figures and motions, of its continents, seas, islands, and oceans; of its volcanoes and ranges of mountains, of its numerous and diversified climates and landscapes; of the various nations and tribes of mankind that people its surface, and of the moral government of God respecting them,—they are almost as completely ignorant as

the untutored Greenlander, or the roving savage.—With regard to the objects which lie beyond the boundary of our world, they have no precise and definite conceptions. When the moon is "walking in brightness" through the heavens, they take the advantage of her light to prosecute their journeys; and, when the sky is overcast with clouds, and they are anxious to travel a few miles to their destined homes, they will lift up their eyes to the heavens to see if any of the stars are twinkling through the gloom, that their footsteps may be directed by their glimmering rays. Beyond this they seldom soar. What may be the nature of the vast assemblage of shining points which adorn the canopy of their habitation, and the ends they are destined to accomplish in the plan of the Creator's operations, they consider as no part of their province to inquire.

> "Their minds, fair Science never taught to stray
> Far as the Solar Worlds, or Milky Way."

How very different, in point of variety, of grandeur, and of extent, are the views of the man who connects all the different departments of knowledge, and the discoveries of science, with his prospects of God's Universal Dominion and Government? With his mental eye he can traverse the different regions of the earth, and penetrate into the most distant and retired recesses where human beings have their residence.—He can contemplate and adore the conduct of Divine Sovereignty, in leaving so many nations to grope amidst the darkness of Heathen Idolatry,—he can trace the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, as they gradually arise to illume the benighted tribes of men,—he can direct his prayers, with intelligence and fervor, in behalf of particular kindreds and people,—he can devise with judgment and discrimination, schemes for carrying the "Salvation of God" into effect,—he can realize, in some measure, to his mental sight, the glorious and happy scenes which will be displayed in the future ages of time, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ," and when the "everlasting gospel" shall be published, and its blessings distributed among all who dwell upon the face of the earth.—He can bound from this earth to the planetary worlds, and survey far more spacious globes, peopled with a higher order of intelligences, arranged and superintended by the same Almighty Sovereign, who "doth according to his will among the inhabitants of the earth." He can wing his way beyond the visible region of the sky, till he find himself surrounded on every hand with suns and systems of worlds, rising to view in

boundless perspective, throughout the tracts of immensity—diversified with scenes of magnificence, and with beings of every order—all under the government and the wise direction of Him who "rules among the armies of heaven," and who "preserveth them all," and whom the "host of heaven worship" and adore. He can soar beyond them all to the throne of God, where angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, celebrate the praises of their Sovereign Lord, and stand ready to announce his Will, by their rapid flight to the most distant provinces of his empire. He can descend from that lofty eminence to this terrestrial world, allotted for his temporary abode, and survey another unbounded province of the Empire of God, in those living worlds which lie hid from the unassisted sight, and which the microscope alone can descry. He can here perceive the same Hand and Intelligence which direct the rolling worlds above, and marshal all the angelic tribes—organizing, arranging, and governing the countless myriads of animated existence which people the surface of a muddy pool. He can speed his course from one of these departments of Jehovah's kingdom to another, till, astonished and overwhelmed with the order, the grandeur, and extent of the wondrous scene, he is constrained to exclaim, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!" "Thine understanding is infinite!" The limits of thy dominions are "past finding out!"

By taking such extensive surveys of the empire of Jehovah, we are enabled to perceive the spirit and references of those sublime passages in the sacred writings which proclaim the Majesty of God, and the glory of his Kingdom. Such passages are diffusely scattered through the inspired volume, and have evidently an extent of reference far beyond what is generally conceived by the great mass of the Christian world. The following may suffice as a specimen:—

'Thine, O Lord! is the greatness, and the glory, and the majesty; for all in heaven and earth is thine! Thine is the kingdom, O Lord! Thou art exalted above all, thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is Power and Might.—Behold the heaven, and the Heaven of heavens, is the Lord's; the earth also, with all that therein is.—Ascribe ye greatness to our God; for there is none like unto the God of Israel, who rideth upon the heavens in his strength, and in his excellency on the sky. Thou, even thou art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the Heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all, and the Host of Heaven

worshippeth thee.—He divideth the sea by his Power; by his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens: Lo! these are only parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him, and the thunder of his Power who can understand?—The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all.—O Lord our God! how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is *man*, that thou art mindful of him!—His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom; Honor and Majesty are before him; *all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing in his sight*, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.—He measures the waters in the hollow of his hand; He meteth out heaven with a span, and comprehendeth the dust of the earth in a measure. —He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers.—I have made the earth, and created man upon it; I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.—The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; for the heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool.—With God is awful Majesty.—Great things doth He, which we cannot comprehend; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.—Praise ye the Lord in the Heavens; praise him in the heights; praise him all his angels; praise ye him all his hosts. Praise him sun and moon; praise him all ye stars of light; praise him ye Heaven of heavens. Praise him ye kings of the earth, and all people, princes, and judges of the earth; both young men and maidens; old men and children—let them praise the name of the Lord; for his name alone is excellent, his glory is above the earth and heaven."

These sublime descriptions of the Supremacy of God, and of the Grandeur of his kingdom, must convince every reflecting mind, of the inconceivable magnificence and extent of that Dominion "which ruleth over all." It is quite evident, that we can never enter, with intelligence, into the full import, and the grand references of such exalted language employed by inspired writers, unless we take into view, all the discoveries which Science has made, both in the earth, and in the heavens, respecting the variety and extent of the Dominions of the Creator. If the "Kingdom of the Most High" were as limited in its range as most Christians seem to conceive, such descriptions might be considered as mere hyperboles, or bombast, or extravagant declamation, which far exceeds the

bounds of "truth and soberness." But we are certain, that the conceptions and the language of mortals can never go beyond the reality of what actually exists within the boundless precincts of Jehovah's Empire. For "who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?" or "who can show forth *all* his praise?" The language and descriptions to which we have now adverted, seem to have had a prospective reference to later and more enlightened times, when more extensive prospects of God's dominions would be opened up by the exertions of the human intellect. And were we to search all the records of literature, in ancient or modern times, we should find no descriptions nor language of such a dignified nature as to express the views and feelings of an enlightened Christian Philosopher, when he contemplates the sublimity and extent of Divine operations—except those which are to be found in the inspired volume—the strength, and majesty, and comprehension of which, no human language can ever exceed.

Again, by familiarizing our minds to such extended prospects of God's universal kingdom, we shall be qualified and disposed to comply with the injunctions of Scripture, which represent it as an imperious duty, *to communicate to the minds of others such elevated conceptions.* This duty is enjoined in numerous passages of Sacred Scripture, particularly in the book of Psalms: "Declare his glory among the heathen, and his wonders among all people.—I will extol thee, my God, O King.—One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.—I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.—And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; and shall declare thy greatness. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. *They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men thy mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of thy kingdom.*"* When we look around us in the world, and in the visible church, and mark the conceptions, and the conversation of the members of religious societies, we need scarcely say how little this ennobling duty is attended to by the mass of those who bear the Christian name. We hear abundance of idle chat about the fashions and the politics of the day—how Miss A. danced so gracefully at the ball, and how Miss B. sung so sweetly at the concert; how Mr. C. acted his part so well in the character of Rob Roy, and how Mr. D. made such a flaming speech at the corpora

* Psalm cxlv. and xcvi. 3, 4.

tion dinner. We listen to slanderous conversation, and hear abundance of mean, and base, and uncharitable insinuations against our neighbors; which indicate the operation of malice, hatred, envy, and other malevolent tempers. We spend whole hours in boisterous disputations about metaphysical subtleties in religion, and questions "which gender strife rather than godly edifying;" but "to speak of the glory of God's kingdom, and to talk of his POWER," with the view of "making known to the sons of men his mighty works," is a duty which remains yet to be learned by a majority of those who profess the religion of Jesus. And how can they be supposed to be qualified to enter into the spirit of this duty, and to proclaim to others "the glorious majesty of God's kingdom," unless such subjects be illustrated in *minute detail*, and proclaimed with becoming energy, both from the pulpit, and from the press? These powerful engines, when conducted with judgment and discrimination, are capable of producing on the mass of mankind, a tone of thinking, and an enlargement of conception, on such subjects, which no other means can easily effect; and it is to be hoped, that more precise and luminous details, and more vigor and animation, will soon be displayed, in this respect, than in the ages that are past.

There is a certain principle of *selfishness* which pervades the minds of many professed religionists, which leads them to conclude, that, if they can but secure their own *personal salvation*, they need give themselves no trouble about the glory and extent of the kingdom of the Most High. "What need we care," say they, "about nations in the far-distant parts of the world, and about the planets and the stars; our business is to attend to the spiritual interests of our souls." Such persons seem neither to understand in what salvation really consists, and what is conducive to their spiritual interests, nor to appreciate those tempers and habits which will qualify them for the enjoyment of eternal life. It forms but a very slender evidence of their possessing any spark of Christianity at all, if they wish to rest satisfied with the most vague and grovelling conceptions, and if they do not ardently aspire after a more enlarged view of the attributes of God, of the glory of his empire, and of whatever may tend to expand their conceptions of "the inheritance of the saints in light." We have often been astonished at the opinions of some of those who move in a higher sphere of intelligence, who seem to consider it as a matter of *pure indifference*, whether or not Christians should attain to the highest conception in their

power of the God whom they worship, and of his boundless dominions; because they conceive that such views are not essentially connected with salvation! But we would ask such persons, how they came to know that such views are not connected with salvation? Though they may not have been essential to the salvation of men in the dark ages that are past, or to obscure tribes of people at present, who have no access to the proper sources of information, yet, since God, in the course of his Providence, which guides all human inventions and discoveries, has disclosed to us a far more expansive view of the "glory of his kingdom," than former ages could obtain, for the purpose of illustrating the revelations of his word—who will dare to assert, that the man who has access, by his studious efforts, to contemplate this wondrous scene, and to display its grandeur to others, and yet wilfully shuts his eyes on the Divine glory therein displayed. does not thereby hazard the Divine displeasure? In this point of view, the following passage deserves a serious consideration: "Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up." We have no hesitation in admitting, that persons may have obtained salvation who never saw more of the sacred writings than what is contained in the gospel of Mark, or in one of Paul's Epistles; but what would we say of the man who had access to all the Revelations of Heaven we now possess, and yet confined his attention solely to a chapter or two in the New Testament, and would not deign to look into any other part of the inspired volume? We should not hesitate at once to pronounce that such a person was grossly deficient in his duty, and devoid of that reverence and submission which are due to the oracles of God. And, if it be admitted, that the person who has access to the Bible, and who refuses to peruse its important contents, is guilty of a criminal neglect, we do not see how the man, who has free access to the other volume of God's revelation, and views it as a matter of mere indifference, whether he looks into it or not, can be deemed, in this respect, entirely innocent. If it be understood, that we shall be judged according to the light and privileges we enjoy, and the use we make of them, in our improvement in the knowledge of God—we would deem it a hazardous position, for any one to support, That "inattention to the visible glories of the kingdom of God, and to the 'declaration of his wonders among the people,' is a matter either of indifference, or of trivial importance."

For, let it be considered, further—that *on the extent of our*

views respecting the universal kingdom of God, depends our conceptions of the Majesty and Glory of the Creator himself. We become acquainted with the nature of God, only in so far as he has manifested himself to us by external operations,* and in so far as we form just conceptions of these operations. If we conceive his empire as included within the bounds of eighty or ninety thousand miles, our conceptions of the Sovereign of that empire will be circumscribed within nearly the same limits. The mind of every reasonable man must, indeed, admit the abstract proposition, "That the Divine Being is infinite, and, consequently, fills all space with his presence." But this infinity in our view, is nothing more than *a vague conception of empty space, extending a little way beyond the sphere of his visible operations.* The mind must have some material, visible or tangible objects to rest upon, and to guide it in its excursions, when it would attempt to form the most definite and comprehensive conceptions of an Infinite, Eternal, and Invisible Existence. For however much we may talk about purely *spiritual ideas*, it is quite evident, from the nature of things, and from the very constitution of man, that we can have no ideas at all without the intervention of *sensible objects.* And, therefore, if we would wish to form the most sublime conceptions of God himself, we must endeavor, in the first place, to take the most extensive views which science and revelation exhibit, of his vast dominions. We must endeavor to form some adequate idea of the wide extent of the globe on which we dwell, its diversified scenery, and the numerous tribes of human beings, and other animated existences, visible and invisible, which people its different provinces. We must explore the vast regions of the planetary system, and compare the bulk of the earth, large as it is, with some of those more magnificent globes, which would contain a thousand worlds as large as ours. We must next wing our way, in imagination, over a space which a cannon-ball, flying five hundred miles every hour, would not traverse in ten hundred thousand years, till we arrive at the nearest fixed stars, and find ourselves in the centre of thousands of systems and worlds, arranged at immeasurable distances from one another. We must pass from one nebula, or cluster of systems, to another; continuing our excursions as far as the eye or the telescope can direct our view; and, when the aid of artificial instruments begins to fail, our imagination must still take its flight far beyond the boundaries of mortal vision, and add system to system, and nebula

* Here I include the manifestations of Deity, as exhibited both in Divine Revelation, and in the System of Nature.

to nebula, through the boundless regions of space, till we arrive at the grand centre of the universe, the Throne of God, around which all worlds and beings revolve, where "thousands thousands" of bright intelligences "minister to Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him."—We must consider all this magnificent assemblage of objects, not merely as so many masses of inert matter, or as a grand raree-show, to dazzle the eyes of a few hundreds of human spectators,—but as destined for purposes worthy of the plans and the intelligence of Him who is "the only wise God,"—as peopled with numerous orders of intelligent beings, whose physical and moral economy is superintended and directed by Him, who, at the same time, rules amidst the tumults of human revolutions, and governs the living myriads which people a drop of water.

In this way, then, do we come to acquire the most extensive views of the amplitude and glory of the Kingdom of the Most High; and it is only by the same process of thought that we can ever attain the most exalted conceptions of the attributes of its almighty Sovereign. For our views of the Sovereign of the universe must always correspond with our views of the extent and magnificence of those dominions which sprung from his Creating Hand, and over which he every moment presides. His essence must for ever remain imperceptible to finite minds; for he is "the King Eternal, immortal, and *Invisible*, dwelling in that Light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or *can* see." From his nature, as a spiritual uncompounded substance, and from his immensity, as filling infinite space with his presence, it appears impossible, in the very nature of things, that the glory of his perfections can be displayed in any other way than through the medium of the visible operations of his hands, or in the dispensations of his providence towards particular worlds or classes of intelligences. And if, in the future world, the souls of good men will enjoy a more glorious display than at present, of the attributes of Deity, it will be owing chiefly to their being placed in more favorable circumstances than they now are, for contemplating this display; to their faculties being more invigorated; and every physical and moral impediment to their exercise being completely removed; so as to enable them to perceive more clearly than they now do, the unbounded displays he has given of his infinite Power, Wisdom, and Benevolence. And, if we expect to be introduced to this state of enlarged vision, when we pass from the scenes of mortality, it cannot be a matter of *mere indifference*, even now, whether or not our minds be prepared for such exalted employments, by

endeavoring to form the most ample conceptions of the attributes of God which can be obtained through the medium of his Word, and by a contemplation of the variety and magnificence of his Works.—In the prospect of that world where we hope to spend an interminable existence, it must also be interesting to ascertain, whether or not the dominions of the universal Sovereign present such an extent of empire, and such a variety of objects, that new scenes of wonder and glory may be expected to be displayed in continual succession, for the contemplation and entertainment of holy beings, while eternal ages are rolling on. And, on this point, the discoveries of science confirm and illustrate the notices of heavenly glory and felicity recorded in the inspired volume, and lead us to rest with full assurance on the prophetic declaration, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

III.—*By connecting the discoveries of Science with Religion, the minds of Christians would be enabled to take a more minute and comprehensive survey of the* OPERATIONS OF PROVIDENCE.

Providence is that superintendence and care which God exercises over all creatures and events, in order to accomplish the eternal purposes of his will. In *Creation*, God brought the universe out of nothing, and arranged all its provinces and inhabitants into due order. By his *Providence* he supports and governs all the movements of the material system, and the sensitive and rational beings with which it is peopled. It is evident, that, in proportion as our views of the Creator's Dominions are extended, our views of his Providence will, to a certain extent, be proportionably enlarged. For wherever worlds and beings exist, there will God be found, preserving, superintending, and governing the movements of all creatures and events. It is chiefly, however, in the world in which we reside, that the diversified dispensations of Providence can be distinctly traced. Now an acquaintance with the prominent parts of the different branches of knowledge to which I have already adverted, would enable us to take a particular and comprehensive view, not only of the ways of God to man, but also of his arrangements in reference to all subordinate creatures and events.

From the Inspired History of the Old Testament, we can trace the prominent lines of the dispensations of God towards man, particularly in regard to the Israelites and the surround-

ing nations—from the Creation to a period about 400 years before the coming of Christ. But in order to perceive the farther progress and bearings of these lines till the commencement of the New Testament economy, we must have recourse to the most authentic records of profane history. From the era of the birth of Christ to near the close of the first century, we can acquire, from the Evangelists, and the History of the Apostles, a particular account of the life of Christ, of the events which preceded and accompanied the finishing of the work of redemption, and of the progress of the Gospel through Judea and the adjacent countries. But after this period we have no *inspired* guide to direct us in tracing the Divine Dispensations towards the various nations of the earth; and, therefore, we must have recourse to the annals, memoirs, chronicles, and other records of the history of nations, down to the period in which we live; otherwise we could never contemplate the continued series of events in the Divine Economy towards the inhabitants of our world. Unless men of learning and of observation had recorded the prominent facts which have occurred in the history of nations, for 1700 years past, we must have remained almost as ignorant of the dispensations of God towards our race, during that period, as the inhabitants of the planet Saturn: and unless we study the events thus recorded in the writings of the historian, and contemplate their varied aspects and bearings in the light of Divine Revelation, we must still remain ignorant of the grand movements and tendencies of Divine Providence. This single circumstance shows, in the clearest light, that it is the intention of God, that we should learn the operations of his Providence from the researches of Science and of History, as well as from the records of Revelation; and that the Scriptures, though they contain every *supernatural* discovery requisite to our happiness, are not of themselves sufficient to present us with a connected view of the prominent dispensations of heaven, from the Creation to the period in which we live.

From the science of *Geography* we acquire a knowledge of the extent of the surface of the earth—of the various tribes of human inhabitants with which it is peopled—of the physical aspect of the different climates they inhabit—of their arts, manners, customs, laws, religion, vices, wars, and political economy: and, consequently, we can, in these and similar respects, trace some of the aspects of Divine Providence towards them in relation to their present and future condition. From the same source, we learn the number of human beings which the Governor of the world has under his direction at

one time, which is nearly a thousand millions, or five hundred times the number of the inhabitants of Scotland. From the data afforded by this science, we may also form an estimate of the number of disembodied spirits that have passed from this world since the Creation, and are now under the superintendence of the Almighty in the invisible state, which cannot be much less than 145,000 millions; and on similar grounds we may also learn the number of rational beings that are coming forward into existence, and passing into the eternal world every day, which is at least 68,000, and, consequently, nearly 50 during each passing minute,—every individual of which, the Supreme Disposer of events superintends at his entrance into life; and, at his departure from it, directs to his respective and eternal state of destination. All which circumstances, and many others of a similar kind, must be taken into account, in order to our forming a comprehensive conception of the numerous bearings, and the incessant agency of a Superintending Providence.

From *Natural History* we learn the immense number and variety of the subordinate tribes of animated beings which inhabit the different regions of earth, air, and sea—their economy and instincts—their modes of existence, and the manner in which the Creator provides for their various necessities. —From an acquaintance with the *History of the Arts and Mechanical Inventions*, we learn the gradual manner in which God directs the movements of the human mind, in making those improvements and discoveries which have a bearing upon the accomplishment of his eternal plans of mercy, and which tend to enlarge our views of the amplitude and the glories of his kingdom. From *Natural Philosophy* and *Chemistry*, we learn the secondary causes or subordinate laws by which the Almighty supports and directs the natural constitution of the world—the wonderful manner in which our lives are every moment supported—and the agencies by which fire, air, light, heat, and fertility are distributed through the globe, for promoting the comfort and happiness "of every thing that lives."—From *Anatomy* and *Physiology*, we learn, how "fearfully and wonderfully we are made and preserved"—that our health and comfort depend upon the regular action of a thousand organical parts and functions, over which we have no control—and that our very existence every moment is dependant on the superintendence of a Superior Power, "in whose Hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways."

By an occasional study, then, of the subjects to which we have now alluded, we would gradually expand our concep-

tions of the range and operations of Divine Providence. Every geographical exploration of a new region of the globe —every scientific improvement and discovery—every useful invention—every eruption of a volcano—every shock of an earthquake—every hurricane, and storm, and tempest—every battle of the warrior—every revolution among the nations—and every detail in the newspapers we daily read, would lead us to form some conceptions of the providential purposes of Him who is the Supreme Disposer of all events.—Even the arrangements of Divine Wisdom, with regard to the economy of the lower animals, ought not to be overlooked in such a survey. When we consider the immense number and variety of animated beings—that there are 500 species of quadrupeds, every species containing, perhaps, many millions of individuals; 4000 species of birds; 2500 species of fishes; 700 species of reptiles; and 44,000 different kinds of insects, besides many thousands of species altogether invisible to the unassisted sight—when we consider that the structure and organization of all these different species are different from each other, and exactly adapted to their various situations and modes of existence, and that their multifarious wants, in regard to food and habitation, are all provided for, and amply supplied by Him, who, at the same time, arranges and governs the affairs of ten thousand worlds—we must be lost in astonishment at the greatness of that Intelligence which formed them, and at the exuberance of that Bounty which spreads so full a table for so immense an assemblage of living beings! And were we transported to other worlds, we should, doubtless, behold still more ample displays of Divine Beneficence.

We are here presented with a striking commentary on such passages of the Sacred Volume as these: "The eyes of all look unto Thee, O Lord! and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand liberally, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. The earth is full of thy riches, O Lord! so is the great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both great and small beasts.—These all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. That which thou givest them they gather: Thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good."—"O Lord, thou preservest man and beast! How excellent is thy loving-kindness! Therefore the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings: They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house,"* (of the table thou hast spread

* This, and several other similar passages, may be considered as more especially applicable to the bounty of Providence which God has provided

in thy world for all thine offspring,) "and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." One excellent practical effect which might flow from such contemplations would be, to inspire us with feelings of humanity towards the inferior order of animals, and to prevent us from wantonly and unnecessarily torturing, or depriving them of existence. For since the Creator and Preserver of all has so curiously organized their bodies, and fitted them for the different regions in which they reside, and so carefully provided for all their wants, it must be His will that they should enjoy happiness according to the extent of their capacities; and, therefore, they ought to be considered as necessary parts of our sublunary system.—Another practical lesson we may derive from such surveys, is, to place an unshaken dependance upon God for our temporal subsistence, while we, at the same time, exert all our faculties in the line of active duty. "Blessed is the man who trusteth in him; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions may suffer hunger, but they that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing."—He who decks the lily of the vale, and spreads out a plentiful table to the fowls of heaven, to the beasts of the forests, to the creeping insects, and even to the microscopic animalcula, will never fail to supply the necessary wants of those who "do His will, and hearken to the voice of His commandments." And if, at any time, we be found destitute of daily food, and pining away in penury and squalid disease, we have too much reason to conclude, that, in one way or another, either our deviation from the path of rectitude, or our distrust of Divine Providence, or our want of prudence and economy, has procured for us these things.

I have said, that it is chiefly in the world in which we dwell, that the dispensations of Providence can be distinctly traced. But we must nevertheless admit that the Care and Superintendence of God are as minutely exercised in the distant regions of the universe as in our terrestrial sphere; though we are not permitted, at present, to inspect the particular details of His procedure in reference to other orders of intelligences.—We are not, however, altogether ignorant of some prominent features of the physical and moral economy of other worlds,

for all his creatures. The practice of *spiritualizing* such passages, as it is termed, has a tendency to carricature Scripture, and to twist it from its precise and sublime references, to accord with the vague fancies of injudicious minds. The literal meaning of Scripture is always the most appropriate, emphatic, and sublime; but it may, in some cases, be used by way of accommodation, in illustrating divine subjects, when it is applied with judgment and discrimination.

in consequence of the discoveries of modern astronomical science.

With respect to their *physical* economy, we behold a striking variety in the Divine arrangement. We perceive one planetary world surrounded by two splendid and magnificent rings, one of them 204,000, and the other 184,000 miles in diameter, stretching across its celestial canopy from one end of the heavens to another—moving with majestic grandeur around its inhabitants every ten hours, and diffusing a light equal to several thousands of moons like ours—which may be considered as a visible and permanent emblem of the Majesty and Glory of their Creator. We perceive connected with the same globe, seven moons all larger than ours, of different magnitudes, and placed at different distances, and revolving in different periods of time around that spacious world. The diversified aspects of these rings, as viewed from the different regions of the planet at different times, and the variety of appearances produced by the alternate rising and setting, culmination, and frequent eclipses, and other aspects of the moons, must present to the inhabitants a very grand, and varied, and magnificent scene of Divine operation.* On the other hand, we behold another planetary globe, destitute both of rings and moons, but which has the starry heavens presented to view nearly in the same aspect in which we behold them. We perceive a third globe much larger than them both, capable of containing 200 times the number of the inhabitants of our world—accompanied in its course with four moons to diffuse light in the absence of the sun, and to diversify the aspect of its sky. In some of these worlds, the succession of day and night is accomplished within the space of ten hours; in others, this revolution is not completed till after the lapse of twenty-four hours, or of as many days. In some, the days and nights are nearly equal on every part of their surface, and they have little variety of seasons; in others, the variety in the length of the days, and the vicissitudes of the seasons, are nearly the same as those we experience in our terrestrial world. Around some there appears a dense atmosphere, while others are environed with atmospheres more rare and transparent. Some move in the vicinity of the sun, and enjoy an abundant efflux of light and heat, while others are removed to the distance of eighteen hundred millions of miles from that central luminary. Some finish the revolution of their year in a few months; while others require twelve, thirty, or even eighty of our years to complete

* See the plate, Fig. 7.

their annual round. Some appear adorned with majestic mountain-scenery, and others seem to have great changes occasionally taking place in their atmospheres, or on their surfaces. There are four planetary bodies lately discovered, which, there is every reason to believe, once formed the component parts of a large globe; but by some mighty catastrophe in the dispensations of heaven, it appears to have been burst asunder into the fragments we now behold. If the general proposition illustrated in Section 2. of the preceding chapter be admitted, such a fact would seem to indicate that a moral revolution has taken place among the intelligent beings who had orginally been placed in those regions; and that their fate was involved in the dreadful shock which burst asunder the globe they inhabited; just as the fate of the Antediluvians was involved in the shock by which the solid crust of our globe was disrupted, at the period of the universal deluge.

These are some outlines in the economy of Providence which we can trace with regard to the arrangements of other worlds; but beyond such general aspects we are not permitted to penetrate, so long as we sojourn in tabernacles of clay.—But even such general views afford some scope to the contemplative mind, for forming enlarged conceptions of the Grandeur and diversity of the Dispensations of God, in the worlds which roll in the distant regions of space.

With regard to their *moral economy*—we may rest assured that the prominent outlines of it are materially the same as of that economy which relates to the inhabitants of our world.—The fundamental principles of the moral laws given to men, and which it is the great object of Revelation to support and illustrate, are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and understanding," and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets.—Now, we must admit, from the nature of the Divine Being, and from the relations in which rational beings stand to Him, and to one another,—that the Creator has enacted these laws, as the great governing principles by which the actions of all intelligences in heaven, as well as upon earth, are to be directed. For the Governor of the world can never be supposed to issue a law to any order of rational creatures, which would permit them to *hate* their Creator, or to hate those whom he has formed after his own image. Such a supposition would be inconsistent with the eternal rules of rectitude, and with the perfections of Deity—and the fact supposed, (if it could exist,) would introduce confusion and misery throughout the whole intelligent

universe. And, therefore, we must necessarily admit, that the laws to which I now advert, are binding upon all the rational inhabitants which exist throughout Jehovah's dominions; and that it is by these that the moral order of all the Principalities and Powers of Heaven is preserved and directed. In those worlds where there is no change in the succession of their inhabitants—or, in other words, where there is no death, or where they are not produced by any process analogous to generation, but have a fixed and permanent residence, there will be no need for moral precepts corresponding to the fifth and the seventh commandments of our moral law; and in those worlds where property is common, and the bounties of the Creator are equally enjoyed by all, there will be no necessity for a law corresponding to the eight commandment; but the general principles on which these laws are founded, will be applicable to all the other circumstances and relations which actually exist; so that the *principle*, and *spirit*, and *essence* of our religion must be common to all the holy inhabitants of the universe. And, therefore, it will follow, that every intelligent being that is animated and directed by such principles and affections, will be qualified for holding delightful intercourse with all holy beings throughout the universe of God, in whatever province of the Creator's empire he may hereafter be placed; and, to qualify us for such harmonious and affectionate intercourses, is one great end of the Salvation exhibited in the Gospel. So that, although we cannot, in our present state, acquire a minute and comprehensive knowledge of the moral history of other worlds, of the special interpositions or manifestations of Deity in relation to them, or of the means by which they are carried forward in moral and intellectual improvement—yet we can trace the *general* principles or laws which form the basis of their moral and religious economy.—For as the laws of optics, and the principle of gravitation, pervade the whole material system, as far as the universe is visible to our assisted vision, so the principle of supreme love to God, and sincere affection to fellow-intelligences must pervade the *intellectual* universe, wherever it extends; and, if any intelligent agents besides men, have violated these laws, they must experience pain, and misery, and disorder, analogous to those which are felt by the inhabitants of our apostate world.

Thus I have endeavored to show, that the combination of Science with Religion would tend to expand our views of Divine Providence—in the various arrangements of God, in relation to the human race, and to the subordinate tribes of

sensitive beings—and in reference to some of the prominent features of his administration in distant worlds. And, therefore, though the Christian ought never to overlook the ways of Providence in relation to himself, and to his spiritual and domestic concerns, yet it would argue a selfishness and a sottishness altogether inconsistent with the noble and expansive spirit of Christianity, to overlook all the other parts of the Theatre of Divine Dispensations, when a very slight degree of labor and research might be instrumental in unfolding them to his view.

IV.—*The connexion of Science with Religion would have a tendency to induce upon Christians* A SPIRIT OF LIBERALITY, OF CANDOR, *and of* ACCURACY IN JUDGING OF THE OPINIONS AND ACTIONS OF MEN, *and of* THE DIVINE PROCEDURE AND OPERATIONS.

Who is the most Candid and Liberal Being in the Universe? *God.*—And why is God to be considered as the most Liberal Intelligence that exists? Because he embraces a minute, a full, and comprehensive view of all the circumstances, connexions, relations, habits, motives, temptations, modes of thinking, educational biases, physical affections, and other causes that may influence the sentiments or the conduct of any of his creatures.—Who among created intelligences may be viewed as endowed with these qualities in the next degree? The loftiest seraph that God has created, who has winged his way to numerous worlds, and taken the most extensive survey of the dispensations of the Almighty, and of all creatures and events.—Who, among the sons of men, is the most illiberal and inaccurate in judging of opinions, of persons, and of things? The man who has lived all his days within the smoke of his father's chimney, or within the confines of his native village—who has never looked beyond the range of his own religious party—whose thoughts have always run in one narrow tract—whose reading has been confined to two or three musty volumes, which have lain for ages on the same smoky shelf—who cares for nothing either in the heavens or the earth, but in so far as it ministers to his convenience, his avarice, or his sensual enjoyment—who will admit no sentiment to be true, but what he may have heard broached by his parson—and whose conversation seldom rises beyond mere gossipping chit-chat, and the slanderous remarks which are circulated among his neighbors.—Such characters are entirely unqualified for forming a correct judg

ment, either of the sentiments and the actions of men, or of the Works and the Ways of God; for they are completely destitute of the requisite *data* whereon to form a rational decision in relation to either of these subjects.

It may be admitted as a kind of axiom, in our estimate of human character, that in proportion to the ignorance, and the narrow range of view which characterize any individual, in a similar proportion will be his want of candor and his unfitness for passing a sound judgment on any subject that is laid before him,—and that the man who has taken excursions through the widest range of thought, accompanied with a corresponding improvement of his moral powers, will always be the most liberal and candid in his decisions on the moral and intellectual qualities of others. To these maxims few exceptions will generally be found.—In forming an enlightened judgment in regard to any action or object, it is essentially requisite, that we contemplate it in all its different features and aspects, and in all its minute circumstances, bearings, and relations. We would not hesitate for a moment to determine who is best qualified to give an accurate description of a city,—he who has only viewed its spires from a distance, while in rapid motion in his chariot—or he who has minutely surveyed all its streets, lanes, squares, public edifices, and surrounding scenery, in every variety of aspect; or, who appears most likely to form the most accurate and enlightened judgment in relation to any particular kingdom—he who has just skirted along a few miles on one of its coasts, or he who has traversed its length and breadth in all directions, and mingled with every class of its inhabitants. On the same principle, it must be admitted, that he who has viewed religion in all its aspects and bearings, who has taken the most extensive survey of the manifestations of God, and of the habits and relations of men, is the best qualified to pronounce a candid and accurate decision on all the intellectual and moral cases that may come before him.

If the spirit of the above-stated sentiments be founded on reason and on fact, it will follow, that the more we resemble God in the amplitude of our intellectual views and benevolent affections, the more candid, and liberal, and accurate will our judgments be in reference to all the actions, objects, and relations we contemplate.—On the other hand, the man who is confined to a narrow range of thought and prospect is continually blundering in the estimates he forms, both in respect to physical facts, to general principles, and to moral actions. He forms a premature and uncharitable opinion on every

slander and report against his neighbor. He condemns, without hesitation, and throws an unmerited odium on whole bodies of men, because one or two of their number may have displayed weakness or folly. He hates and despises men and their opinions, because they belong not to his political or religious party. He pronounces his decisions on the motives of men, with as much confidence as if he had surveyed their hearts with the eye of omniscience. He cannot hear an objection against his favorite opinions with patience, nor an apology for any set of principles but his own. He is arrogant and dogmatical in his assertions, and will make no concessions to the superior wisdom of others. He sets himself, with violence, against every proposal for reformation in the church, because his forefathers never thought of it, and because such "innovations" do not suit his humor and preconceived opinions. He decides, in the most confident tone, on what God *can* and *cannot* do, as if he had taken the gauge of Infinite Perfection; and he frets at the Divine dispensations when they do not exactly quadrate with his own humors and selfish views.

With regard to the operations of the Most High, he also forms the most foolish, and vague, and contradictory conceptions. Tell him of the vast dimensions of the planetary system, of the men and animals that live on the opposite side of the globe, of the annual and diurnal motion of the earth—that this world and its inhabitants are moving through the regions of space many thousands of miles every hour—that one of the planets is so large that it would contain 1400 worlds as spacious as ours—that another is flying through the tracts of immensity, at the rate of a hundred thousand miles in an hour—and that light is darted from the sun with a velocity of 195,000 miles in a moment of time—he will stare at you with astonishment at such extravagant assertions, and will sooner believe the stories of giants 100 feet high, and of fairies that can enter in crowds through the key-hole of his door. Instead of frankly acknowledging that "He is ignorant of such subjects, and of the grounds of such conclusions,—that those who have studied them with intelligence are best capable of judging,—that, if true, they must fill us with admiration of the glory of God—but that, as he has hitherto had no opportunity of examining such matters, he must suspend his assent till he inquire into the reasons which can be given for such amazing deductions;"—instead of such concessions, which are the dictates of modesty and of common sense—he will tell you at once, without hesitation, and

without a blush at his presumptuous decisions, that "it is all extravagance, and folly, and idle romance, contrary to Scripture, and reason, and common sense;" and will not hesitate to brand you as a heretic, for endeavoring to break loose his intellectual trammels!—thus tacitly declaring, that he is far better qualified to pronounce a decision on such topics, than all the philosophers and divines, and all the brightest geniuses who have appeared in the world for ages past; though he will at the same time admit, that he never gave himself the trouble to examine into such matters!

His views of the providential dispensations of God are equally partial and distorted. If disease, or poverty, or misfortune, happen to his neighbor, especially if he had withdrawn from the religious party to which he belongs, it is considered as a penal judgment for his error and apostacy. If prosperous circumstances attend his family or his religious party, it is viewed as a sign of divine approbation. He seldom views the hand of God, except in uncommon occurrences; and then, he imagines that a miracle is performed, and that the wheels of nature are stopped in order to accomplish the event. He seldom looks beyond the precincts of his own church or nation, to observe the movements of the Divine footsteps towards other tribes of his fallen race. He overlooks the traces of Divine operation which are every moment to be seen above and around him—and yet, in the midst of all such partial and contracted views, he will sometimes decide on the Wisdom and Rectitude of the ways of God, with as much confidence, as if he had entered into the secret counsels of the Eternal, and surveyed the whole plan of his procedure.

Such are a few prominent outlines of the character of thousands whose names are enrolled as members of the visible church—whose illiberality and self-conceit are owing to the contracted notions they have formed of God and of Religion. And, surely, it must appear desirable to every enlightened Christian, that every proper means should be used to prevent rational immortal beings from remaining enchained in such mental thraldom.

On the other hand, the man who takes an enlightened view of all the works and dispensations of God, and of all the circumstances and relations of subordinate beings, necessarily acquires a nobleness and liberality of mind, and an accuracy in judging of things human and divine, which no other person can possess. He does not hastily take up an evil report against his neighbor; for he considers how unfounded such

reports often are, and how much they are owing to the insinuations of envy or of malice. And when he can no longer doubt of an evil action being substantiated against any one, he does not triumph over him in the language of execration; for he considers all the circumstances, relations, feelings, and temptations with which he may have been surrounded; he considers, that he himself is a frail sinful creature, and might possibly have fallen in a similar way, had he been placed in the same situation. He does not trumpet forth the praises of a man who has performed *one* brilliant benevolent deed, as if he were a character to be admired and eulogized—while the general course of his life is marked with vice, and an utter forgetfulness of God and Religion; nor does he fix a stigma of immorality upon the person who may have acted foolishly or sinfully, in one or two instances, while the general tenor of his conduct has been marked by purity and rectitude: for, in both cases, he considers, that it is not an *insulated action*, but *general habits*, which determine the character of of any individual. He esteems the Wise and the Good, and holds friendly intercourse with them, to whatever political or religious party they belong. He can bear, with affability and candor, to have his opinions contradicted, and can differ from his neighbor in many disputed points, while, at the same time, he values and esteems him. He will not brand a man as a Heretic or a Deist, because he takes a view of some dogmas in Theology, in a different light from what he himself does; for he considers the difference of habits, studies, pursuits, and educational prejudices which must have influenced his opinions; and makes due allowance for the range of thought to which he may have been accustomed. He is always disposed to attribute the actions of others to good motives, when he has no proof of the contrary. He uses no threats nor physical force to support his opinions, or to convince gainsayers; for he knows that no external coercion can illuminate the mind, and that the strength of arguments, and the force of truth, can alone produce conviction. He is convinced how ignorant he is, notwithstanding all his study, observations, and researches, and presses forward, as long as he lives, to higher degrees of knowledge and of moral improvement.

He is an active promoter of every scheme that tends to enlighten and meliorate mankind, and to extend the knowledge of Salvation to the ends of the earth; for he considers that it is not by *miracles*, but by the subordinate agency of intelligent beings, that God will effectuate the illumination and the

moral renovation of our apostate race. He views the special agency of God in all the movements of the Scientific, the Religious, and the Political world, and perceives Him accomplishing his purpose, in the inventions of human genius, and in the economy of the minutest insect, as well as in the earthquake, the storm, and the convulsions of nations; for he considers the smallest atom, and the hosts of Heaven, as equally directed by Eternal Wisdom, and equally necessary in the universal chain of creatures and events. He displays a becoming *modesty* in speaking of the ways and the works of God. When he meets with any dark and afflictive dispensation in the course of Providence, he does not fret and repine, but is calm and resigned, conscious that he perceives only a small portion of the chain of God's dispensations, and is, therefore, unable to form a just comparison of the connexion of any one part with the whole. When he contemplates the depraved and wretched condition of the greater part of the world, at present, and for thousands of years past, notwithstanding the salvation which has been achieved for sinners of mankind, he is far from arraigning the Divine goodness and rectitude, in leaving so many nations "to walk in their own ways;" for he knows not what relation this dismal scene may bear, what influence it may have, or what important impressions it may produce on worlds and beings with which we are at present unacquainted.

He is cautious in pronouncing decisively respecting the dispensations of God, *in regard to the universe at large.* He does not, for example, assert, with the utmost confidence, as some have done, "that there never was, and never will be, to all the ages of eternity, such a bright display of the Divine Glory as in the Cross of Christ."* He admires and adores the Condescension and the Love of God, in the plan of Salvation, which the Gospel exhibits, and feels an interest in it far beyond that of any other special manifestation of Deity; but he dares not set limits to the Divine Attributes and Operations. He considers himself at present, with regard to the grand system of the Universe, in a situation similar to that of a small insect on one of the stones of a magnificent edifice which sees only a few hair-breadths around it, and is altogether incapable of surveying the symmetry, the order, and beauty of the structure, and in forming an adequate conception of the whole. He considers that he has never yet surveyed the millioneth part of Jehovah's empire, and, therefore, cannot

* See Note, page 339.

tell what the Eternal Sovereign has been pleased to exhibit in its numerous provinces; and, least of all, can he ever presume to dive into the depths of interminable ages, and boldly declare what the Almighty will, or will not do, through eternity to come. He, therefore, views it as presumption, while he has no dictate of revelation for his warrant, to pronounce decisively, either on the one side or the other, of such a deep and important question, which seems above the reach of the loftiest Seraph to determine.* In short, he endeavors to take a view of all the manifestations of Deity within his reach, from every source of information which lies before him, and as far as his limited faculties will permit. He does not call in question the discoveries of science, because they bring to his ears most astonishing reports of the Wisdom and Omnipotence of Jehovah, and of the boundless extent of his Kingdom; but rejoices to learn, that the grandeur of his dominions is actually found to correspond with the lofty descriptions of Divine Majesty and Glory, recorded in the volume of Inspiration, and is thereby inspired with nobler hopes of the glory and felicity of that heavenly world where he expects to spend an endless existence.

If, then, such be some of the features in the character of the enlightened Christian; if liberality and candor, and accurate investigation, mark the judgments he pronounces on the sentiments and the actions of men, and on the works and the ways of God; and if such views and feelings ought to be considered as more congenial to the noble and benevolent spirit of our religion, than the narrow and distorted notions of a contracted mind, it must be an object much to be desired, that the mass of the Christian world be led into such strains of thought, as might imbue their minds with a larger proportion of this spirit. And, if diversified and occasional discussions on the topics to which we have adverted, would have a tendency to produce this desirable effect, it is obvious, that such branches of knowledge as are calculated to enlarge the capacity of the mind, and to throw a light over the revelations and the works of God, should no longer be overlooked in the range of our religious contemplations.

* See Appendix, No. X.

V.—*The extensive range of thought which the diversified objects in Nature present*, WOULD HAVE A TENDENCY TO INSPIRE US WITH A SPIRIT OF PIETY, AND OF PROFOUND HUMILITY.

It is owing, in many instances, to want of attention to the impressive displays of Wisdom and Omnipotence in the material world, that our pious feelings and devotional exercises are so cold and languid. We stalk about on the surface of the earth, and pass from one day to another, without reflecting on the grand and complicated machinery around us, which is carrying us along through the regions of space, and from one portion of duration to another, as if the mighty energies of the Eternal mind, exerted in our behalf, were unworthy of our acknowledgment or regard. How few, for example, reflect when they open their eyes in the morning, and perceive the first beams of the rising sun, that, since they lay down to sleep, the Divine Power has been exerted in carrying them more than four thousand miles round to the eastward, in order that they might again be cheered with the morning light; and that, during the same period, they, along with the earth and its vast population, have been carried forward 476,000 miles from that portion of space which they occupied seven hours before! Or, if they have no idea of the motion of the earth, and attach no belief to such an opinion, how is it they do not reflect that, after night has thrown its shades around them, the sun, and ten thousand other vast globes must move several hundreds of millions of miles, before their eyes can again behold the light of day? Either the one or the other of these cases *must be the fact*; and, in either case, there is presented to our view, a display of the Omnipotence, and the Superintendence of Him in whom we live and move, which demands our gratitude, our admiration, and praise. And can it ever be supposed, that such reflections, combined with all the other excitements to reverence and gratitude, will not tend to elevate our contemplations, and to raise our pious feelings to a higher pitch of devotion? Whether the Psalmist entertained any views of this kind when he composed the ninety-second Psalm, we cannot certainly determine; but I presume, the pious and contemplative mind, when awaking from the slumbers of the night, under such impressions might sing the first part of that song of praise with peculiar emphasis and delight—"It is a good thing to give thanks to Jehovah, and to sing praise to thy name, O thou most High! to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning. For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work," (or thy

powerful energy ;) " I will triumph in the works of thy hands O Lord ! HOW GREAT ARE THY WORKS ! and thy thoughts" (or contrivances) " are very deep ! A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this."

An extensive acquaintance with nature and science, combined with Christian principle, would also induce *profound humility*. The man who has made excursions through the most diversified regions of thought, is deeply sensible of the little progress he has attained, and of the vast and unbounded field of Divine science which still remains to be explored. When he considers the immense variety of sublime subjects which the volume of inspiration exhibits, and of which he has obtained but a very faint and imperfect glimpse—the comprehensive extent, and the intricate windings of the operations of Providence, and the infinite number of beings over which it extends—the amplitude and magnificence of that glorious universe over which Jehovah presides, and how small a portion of it lies open to his minute inspection—he is humbled in the dust at the view of his own insignificance ; he sees himself to be a very babe in knowledge ; and, as it were, just emerging from the gloom of ignorance into the first dawnings of light and intelligence. He feels the full force and spirit of the Poet's sentiments—

" Much learning shows *how little* mortals know."

When he considers the comprehensive extent of the Divine law, and its numerous bearings on every part of his conduct, and on all the diversified relations in which he stands to his God, and to his fellow men ; and when he reflects on his multiplied deviations from that eternal rule of rectitude, he is ashamed and confounded in the presence of the Holy One of Israel ; and, on a review of his former pride and self-conceit, is constrained to adopt the language of Agur and of Asaph— " Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man." " So foolish was I, and *ignorant*, I was as a beast before thee." He views the meanest and the most ignorant of his species, as but a very few degrees below him in the scale of intelligence, and sees no reason why he should glory over his fellows.

This sentiment might be illustrated from the example of some of the most eminent men in whose minds science and religion were combined. The Honorable Mr. BOYLE was the most unwearied and successful explorer of the works of God, in the age in which he lived, and all his philosophical pursuits were consecrated to the service of Religion. Among other excellent traits in his character, *humility* was the most

conspicuous. "He had about him," says Bishop Burnet, "all that unaffected neglect of pomp in clothes, lodging, furniture, and equipage, which agreed with his grave and serious course of life," and was courteous and condescending to the meanest of his fellow men. "He had," says the same author, "the profoundest veneration for the Great God of Heaven and earth, that ever I observed in any person. The very *name* of God was never mentioned by him without a pause, and a visible stop in his discourse;" and the tenor of his philosophical and theological writings is in complete unison with these traits of character. Sir Isaac Newton, too, whose genius seemed to know no limits but those of the visible universe, was distinguished by his *modesty*, *humility*, and *meekness* of temper. He had such an *humble* opinion of himself, that he had no relish of the applause which was so deservedly paid him. He would have let others run away with the glory of his inventions, if his friends and countrymen had not been more jealous of his honor than he was himself. He said, a little before his death, "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself, I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

The same sentiment might have been illustrated from the lives of Bacon, Locke, Dr. Boerhaave, Hervey, Nieuwentyt, Ray, Derham, the Abbe Pluche, Bonnet, and other eminent characters, who devoted their stores of knowledge to the illustration of the Christian system. For an *extensive* knowledge of the operations of God has a *natural tendency* to produce humility and veneration; and wherever it is combined with pride and arrogance, either among philosophers or divines, it indicates a lamentable deficiency, if not a complete destitution of Christian principle, and of all those tempers which form the bond of union among holy intelligences. After the attention of Job had been directed to the works of God, and when he had contemplated the inexplicable phenomena of the Divine agency in the material world, he was ashamed and confounded at his former presumption; and, in deep humility, exclaimed, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye see thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."—In accordance with what has been now stated, we find, that the most exalted intelligences who, of course, possess the most extensive views of the works and providential arrangements of God, are represented as also the most humble in their deportment, and as displaying the most

profound reverence in their incessant adorations. They "*fall down* before him who sits upon the throne; and *cast their crowns before the throne*, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Their moral conduct evinces the same lowly temper of mind. They wait around the throne, in the attitude of motion, with wings outspread ready to fly, on the first signal of their Sovereign's will; they "do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word," and do not disdain to perform important services, in our wretched world, to the meanest human being who is numbered among "the heirs of salvation." In like manner, were *we* endued with the grasp of intellect, the capacious minds, the extensive knowledge, and the moral powers which they possess, we would also display the same humble and reverential spirit, and feel ashamed of those emotions of vanity and pride, which dispose so many of the human family to look down with contempt on their fellow mortals.

If the leading train of sentiment which pervades this volume be admitted, the following GENERAL CONCLUSIONS may be adduced:—That, in conducting the religious instruction of the young, the works of God in the material world, and the most striking discoveries which have been made as to their magnitude, variety, and mechanism, should be frequently exhibited to their view *in minute detail;* as illustrations of the attributes of the Deity, and of those descriptions of his nature and operations contained in the Volume of Inspiration;—that the books put into their hands should contain, among other subjects, popular and striking descriptions of the facts and appearances of nature;—that seminaries should be established for the occasional instruction of young persons, from the age of 15 to the age of 20 or 30, or upwards, in all those popular branches of natural and moral science which have a tendency to enlarge the capacity of their minds, and to expand their conceptions of the incessant agency of God;—and that the Ministers of Religion, in their public instructions, should frequently blend their discussions of divine topics with illustrations derived from the scenes of creation and providence.

APPENDIX:

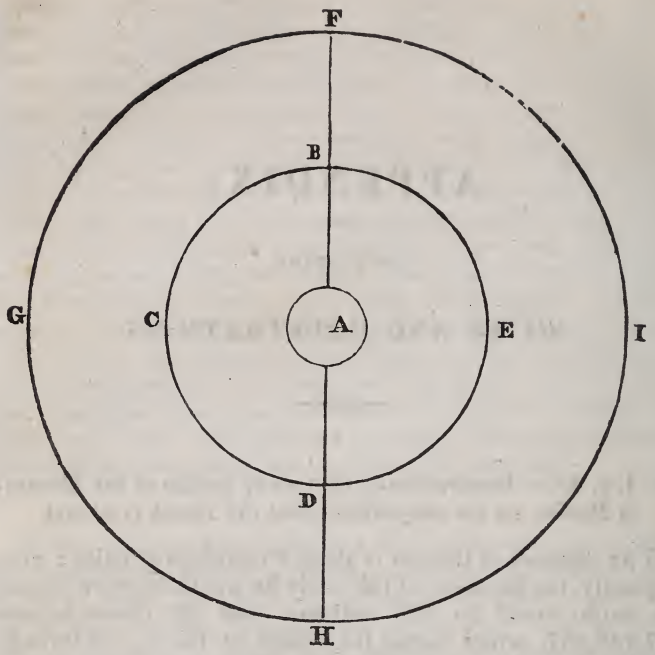
CONTAINING

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

No. I. p. 48.—*Illustration of the rate of motion in the Heavenly Bodies, on the supposition that the Earth is at rest.*

The distance of the sun is about 95 millions of miles; consequently, the diameter of the circle he would describe around the earth would be 190 millions, and its circumference 597,142,857, which forms the extent of the circuit through which he would move in 24 hours, if the earth were at rest. This number divided by 24, gives 24,880,952, the number of miles he would move in an hour; and this last number, divided by 60, gives 414,682, the number of miles he would move in a minute. The nearest star is reckoned to be at least 20,000,000,000,000 or twenty billions of miles distant from the earth; consequently, its daily circuit round our globe would measure more than 125,000,000,000,000 miles. This sum divided by 86,400, the number of seconds in a day, would give 1,454,861,111, or somewhat more than one thousand four hundred millions of miles, for its rate of motion in a second of time—a motion which, were it actually existing, would, in all probability, shatter the universe to atoms.

The unlearned reader may, perhaps, acquire a more distinct idea of this explanation from the following figure:



Let the small circle A, in the centre, represent the Earth, and the circle B C D E the orbit of the Sun, on the supposition that he moves round the Earth every 24 hours. The line A B will represent the distance of the Sun from the Earth, or 95 millions of miles ; the line B D the *diameter* of the orbit he would describe ; and the circle B C D E the circumference along which he would move every day, or 597 millions of miles, which is somewhat more than three times the diameter. If the line A F represent the distance of the nearest star, the circle F G H I will represent the circuit through which it would move every 24 hours, if the earth were at rest. It is obvious, from the figure, that since the stars are at a greater distance from the earth than the sun, the circle they would describe around the earth would be larger in proportion, and, consequently, their velocities would be proportionably more rapid ; since they would move through their larger circles in the same time in which the sun moved through his narrower sphere. But the supposition that the earth is the

centre of all the celestial motions, and that the different stars are daily moving around it with different velocities, and the slowest of these motions is so inconceivably rapid—is so wild and extravagant, that it appears altogether inconsistent with the harmony of the universe—with the Wisdom and Intelligence of the Deity, and with all the other arrangements he has made in the system of nature.

No. II. p. 72.—*Experimental Illustrations of the Pressure of the Atmosphere.*

The pressure of the atmosphere is most strikingly illustrated by means of the air pump. But as few persons, comparatively, possess this instrument, the following experiments, which any person may perform at pleasure, are sufficiently convincing on this point. Take a common wine glass, and fill it with water; apply a piece of paper over the mouth of the glass; press the paper to the rim of the glass with the palm of the hand; turn the glass upside down; withdraw the hand from the paper, and the water will be supported by the pressure of the atmosphere. That it is the atmospherical pressure, and not the paper, which supports the water is evident; for the paper, instead of being pressed down by the weight of the water, is pressed upward by the pressure of the atmosphere, and appears *concave*, or hollow in the middle. If the flame of a candle be applied to the paper, it may be held, for an indefinite length of time, close to the paper, without setting fire to it. The same fact is proved by the following experiment:—Take a glass tube, of any length, and of a narrow bore; put one end of it in a basin of water; apply the mouth to the other end, and draw out the air by suction; the water will immediately rise toward the top of the tube; and if the finger or thumb be applied to the top of the tube, to prevent the admission of air and the tube removed from the basin of water, the water in the tube will be supported by the pressure of the atmosphere on the lower end. Again:—Take, a wine glass, and burn a small bit of paper in it; and, when the paper is burning, press the palm of the hand upon the mouth of the glass, and it will adhere to the hand with considerable force. In this case, the pressure of the atmosphere will be *sensibly* felt; for it will sometimes require considerable force to detach the glass from the hand.

The pressure of the atmosphere explains a variety of common phenomena. When we take a draught of water out of a

basin, or a running stream, we immerse our mouths in the water, and make a vacuum by drawing in the air; the pressure of the atmosphere upon the external surface of the water then forces it into the mouth. The same cause explains the process of a child sucking its mother's breasts—the action of a boy's sucker, in lifting large stones—the rise of water in pumps—the effects produced by *cements*—the firm adhesion of snails and periwinkles to rocks and stones—the scarcity of water in the time of hard frosts—and the fact that a cask will not run by the cock, unless a hole be opened in some other part of the cask.

No. III. p. 253.—*On the means by which it may probably be ascertained whether the Moon be a habitable world.*

About six years ago, the Author published, in the Monthly Magazine, a few observations on the surface of the Moon, in which a few remarks were offered on this subject. The following is an extract from that communication:—

"If we be ever to obtain an ocular demonstration of the habitability of any of the celestial orbs, the Moon is the only one, where we can expect to trace, by our telescopes, indications of the agency of sentient or intelligent beings; and I am pretty much convinced, that a long continued series of observations on this planet, by a number of individuals in different places, might completely set at rest the question, 'Whether the Moon be a habitable world?' Were a vast number of persons, in different parts of the world, to devote themselves to a particular survey of the Moon—were different portions of her surface allotted to different individuals, as the object of their particular research—were every mountain hill, cavern, cliff, and plain accurately inspected—and every change and modification in the appearance of particular spots carefully marked and represented in a series of delineations, it might lead to some certain conclusions, both as to her physical constitution, and her ultimate destination. It can be demonstrated, that a telescope which magnifies 100 times, will show a spot on the Moon's surface, whose diameter is 1223 yards; and one which magnifies a thousand times, will, of course, enable us to perceive a portion of her surface, whose size is only 122 yards: and, consequently, an object, whether natural or artificial, of no greater extent than one of our large edifices, (for example, St. Paul's Church, London,) may, by such an instrument, be easily distinguished. Now,

if every minute point on the Lunar surface were accurately marked by numerous observers, it might be ascertained whether any changes are taking place, either from physical causes, or from the operations of intelligent agents. If a large forest were cutting down—if a city were building in an open plain, or extending its former boundaries—if a barren waste were changing into a scene of vegetation—or, if an immense concourse of animated beings were occasionally assembled on a particular spot, or shifting from one place to another—such changes would be indicated by certain modifications of shade, color, or motion; and, consequently, would furnish a direct proof of the agency of intelligent beings analogous to man, and of the Moon being a habitable globe. For although we may never be able to distinguish the *inhabitants* of the Moon (if any exist) yet if we can trace those *effects* which can flow only from the operations of intelligent agents, it would form a complete demonstration of their existence, on the same ground on which a Navigator concludes an unknown island, to be inhabited, when he perceives human habitations, and cultivated fields.

"That changes occasionally happen on the lunar hemisphere next the earth, appears from the observations of Herschel and Schroeter, particularly from those of the latter. In the transactions of the 'Society of Natural Philosophy,' at Berlin, Schroeter relates, that on the 30th December, 1791, at 5 o'clock, *p. m.* with a 7 feet reflector, magnifying 161 times, he perceived the commencement of a small crater on the south-west declivity of the volcanic mountain in the *Mare Crisium*, having a shadow of at least 2″ 5. On the 11th January, at 20 minutes past five, on looking at this place again, he could see neither the new crater nor its shadow. Again, on the 4th January, 1792, he perceived, in the eastern crater of Helicon, a central mountain, of a clear gray color, 3″ in diameter, of which, during many years' observations, he had perceived no trace. 'This appearance,' he adds, 'is remarkable, as probably from the time of Hevelius, the western part of Helicon has been forming into its present shape, and Nature seems, in that district, to be particularly active.'—In making such minute observations as those to which I allude, it would be proper, along with an inspection of the moon's luminous disk, to mark the appearances of different portions of her dark hemisphere, when it is partially enlightened by the reflected light from the earth, soon after the appearance of new moon. These researches would require a *long-continued* series of the most minute observations, by numerous

observers in different regions of the globe, which could be effected only by exciting, among the bulk of mankind, a general attention to such investigations. But were this object accomplished, and were numerous observations made from the tops of mountains, and in the serene sky of southern climes, where the powers of the telescope are not counteracted by dense vapors, there can be little doubt that direct proofs would be obtained that the Moon is a habitable world; or, at least, that the question in relation to this point would be completely set at rest."

No. IV.—*Remarks on the late pretended discovery of a Lunar Fortification.*

The British Public was lately amused by the announcement of a discovery said to have been made by Professor Frauenhofer, of Munich. This gentleman was said to have discovered a *fortification* in the Moon, and to have distinguished several lines of road, supposed to be the work of the lunar inhabitants. It is scarcely necessary to say, that such announcements are obviously premature. To perceive distinctly the shape of an object in the Moon, which resembles a fortification, it is requisite, that that object be of a much larger size than our terrestrial ramparts. Besides, although an object resembling one of our fortifications were perceived on the surface of the moon, there would be no reason to conclude, that it served the same purpose as fortifications do among us. We are so much accustomed to *war* in our terrestrial system, and reflect so little on its diabolical nature, that we are apt to imagine that it must form a necessary employment even in other worlds. To be assured that a fortification existed in the Moon for the same purpose as with us, would indeed be dismal tidings from another world; for it would be a necessary conclusion, from such intelligence, that the inhabitants of that globe are actuated by the same principles of depravity, ambition, and revenge, which have infected the moral atmosphere of our sublunary world. With regard to the pretended discovery of the Lunar *roads*, it may not be improper to remark, that such roads behooved to be at least 400 feet broad, or ten times the breadth of ours, in order to be perceived as faint lines through a telescope which magnifies a thousand times; which is a higher power, I presume, than Frauenhofer can apply with *distinctness* to any of his tele-

scopes. It is not at all likely that the lunar inhabitants are of such a gigantic size, or employ carriages of such an enormous bulk, as to require roads of such dimensions, since the whole surface of the Moon is only the thirteenth part of the area of our globe.

Schroeter conjectures the existence of a great city to the north of *Marius*, (a spot in the moon,) and of an extensive canal towards *Hygena*, (another spot,) and he represents part of the spot named *Mare Imbrium*, to be as fertile as the Campania. See *Edin. Phil. Jour. No.* 21, *for July*, 1824. Similar remarks to those now stated will apply to these conjectures of Schroeter. We are too apt to imagine, that the objects we perceive in the moon must bear a certain resemblance to those with which we are acquainted on the Earth; whereas, there is every reason to believe, from the variety we perceive in nature, that no one world resembles another, except in some of its more prominent and *general* arrangements. The Moon bears a general resemblance to the Earth, in its being diversified with mountains and valleys; but the positions and arrangement of these objects in the Moon, and the scenery they exhibit, are materially different from what appears on the surface of the terraqueous globe.

No. V.—*On the ideas of Magnitude, Motion, and Duration, as expressed by numbers.* *See pp.* 93, 98.

In the pages referred to, and other parts of this volume, some very large numbers are expressed in *figures*. Some readers have insinuated, that it would have been better to have expressed such numbers in *words*. The Author, however, is of a different opinion; because, to some readers, not much acquainted with *Numeration*, a thousand *trillions* would convey nearly the same idea as a thousand *nonilions*, though the one number contains 58 places of figures, and the other only 22. It is chiefly the number of figures, or cyphers, in such large sums, that leads us to form a comparative estimate of their value or extent. Our ideas of magnitude and extension, conveyed by such numbers, must, of course, be very vague and undefined. If we have been accustomed to travelling, we have a tolerably clear conception of a *hundred*, and even of a *thousand* miles; but we have no clear nor *adequate* conception of a body, or a portion of space, ten hundred thousand, ten hundred millions, or ten hundred billions of

miles in extent. The mind, however, may be assisted in its conceptions, and in its comparative estimate of different numbers, by fixing on some particular number as a standard. If, according to the common reckoning, we suppose, that 5828 years have elapsed since the commencement of time, the number of seconds, or moments, in this period, will amount to 183,913,782,212, or one hundred and eighty-three thousand nine hundred and thirteen millions, seven hundred and eighty-two thousand, two hundred and twelve, which is less than the fifth part of a billion. If the distance of the nearest stars from the earth be at least 20 billions of miles, then this distance may be otherwise expressed, by saying, that the number of miles which intervene between us and these bodies is more than *a hundred times greater* than the number of moments, which have elapsed since the creation ; and, by a similar comparison, it will be found that the number of cubical miles within the limits of the planetary system, is 130,000,000,000,000,000, or, one hundred and thirty thousand billions of times greater than the number of moments in 5828 years.

It has been computed, that the earth, supposing it a solid globe, contains about 30,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, or thirty septillions of grains of sand, supposing a hundred grains of sand to be equal in length to an inch, and, consequently, a million of such grains for every cubical inch. If we use this number as a standard for estimating the number of *cubical* miles contained within the space which intervenes between us and the nearest stars, we shall find that the number of *cubical miles* comprehended within this space, is more than ten thousand millions of times greater than the number of the grains of sand contained in the globe on which we dwell.

Though the human mind can form no definite conceptions of such numbers and magnitudes, yet it may be useful, occasionally, to ruminate on such subjects ; as it is the only, or, at least, the principal mode by which limited minds like ours can approximate to an idea of the *infinity* of the Creator. And if an *image* of infinity is presented to the mind in the spaces comprehended within the limits of our system, how overpowering the conception of innumerable systems, to which ours bears no more proportion than a drop of water to the mighty ocean? How ineffably glorious must be the attributes of that Incomprehensible Being who pervades every part of this vast universe, and who continually superintends all its minute and diversified movements!

No. VI. p. 195.—*On a Plurality of Worlds.*

THE doctrine of a plurality of worlds is now admitted as highly probable both by philosophers and by enlightened divines. But it has been admitted by many persons, on grounds that are too general and vague, and consequently, a *full conviction* of its truth is seldom produced in the mind. In different parts of the preceding volume, I have all along taken it for granted, because I consider it as susceptible of a moral *demonstration*.—The following heads of argument, were they fully illustrated, would go far to carry demonstration to the mind on this subject: namely, That there are numerous bodies in the universe of a bulk sufficient to contain myriads of intelligent beings, and to afford them enjoyment—that there appears, in the constitution of many of these bodies, a variety of arrangements evidently adapted to this end—that, in relation to the planets of our system, there are many circumstances which bear a striking resemblance to the constitution of our globe and its appendages: They have annual and diurnal motions, moons, atmospheres, mountains and vales—that light, and heat, and color, appear to be distributed throughout the regions of immensity; and that these agents can have a relation only to the necessities and the happiness of organized intelligences—that every part of nature, so far as our observations on the surface of this globe extend, appears to exist solely for the sake of sentient beings—that this doctrine is more worthy of the Infinite Creator, and gives a more glorious and magnificent idea of his nature, than to suppose his benevolent regards confined to the globe on which we dwell. When these and a variety of other arguments are considered, in connection with the *Wisdom* and other attributes of the Deity, they amount not only to a high degree of probability, but to something approaching to a moral demonstration. But to illustrate these arguments in a minute detail, so as to make a convincing impression on the mind, would require a volume of a considerable size. The Author flatters himself he has some original thoughts on this subject, which may probably see the light should the present work meet with public acceptance. There is no work in our language which takes an extensive view on this subject, in connection with the attributes of the Deity, and the intimations contained in Divine Revelation. Fontenelle's "Plurality of Worlds," contains a number of ingenious reasonings; but he treats the subject in too light and flippant a manner, and without the least reference to a Supreme Intelligence. The celebrated Huygens in his "*Cosmotheoros*,"

instead of attempting to prove the doctrine of a plurality of worlds, takes it for granted, and indulges chiefly in conjectures respecting the organical structure, and faculties of their inhabitants.

That the Scriptures are silent on this head, has been assumed by some as a presumptive argument that this doctrine is without a solid foundation. I have already endeavored to show that this assumption is unfounded, (see page 193.) A plurality of worlds is more than once asserted in Scripture, and in numerous passages, is evidently taken for granted. Celestial intelligences are represented as ascribing "glory, honor, wisdom and power" to the King of Heaven, "because he hath created all things," and because they perceive his works to be "great and marvellous." But if all the great globes in the firmament were only so many frightful deserts, destitute of inhabitants, such a universe could never inspire superior intelligences with admiration of the *wisdom* of the Creator. For wisdom consists in proportioning *means* to *ends;* but, in the case supposed, there would be no proportion between the means and the end. The means are indeed great and astonishing; but no end appears to justify such a display of creating energy.—The Psalmist, when he contemplated the heavens, was so affected with the idea of the immense population of the universe, that he seems to have been almost afraid lest he should be overlooked amidst the immensity of beings that are under the superintendence of God. "When I consider thy heavens—what is man that thou art mindful of him!" There would be no propriety nor emphasis in this exclamation, if the heavenly orbs were devoid of inhabitants; for, if no intelligent beings exist besides man, and a colony of angels, it would not appear wonderful that the Creator should exercise a particular care over the one half of his intelligent offspring. But, if we conceive the universe as composed of ten thousand times ten thousand worlds, peopled with myriads of intellectual beings of various orders, the sentiment of admiration implied in the passage is extremely natural and emphatic, and conveys to us an impressive idea of the Intelligence, the Benificence, and the Condescension of the Founder and Governor of all worlds.

No. VII. p. 246.—*On the first Inventor of Printing.*

Mr. Ireland, in his "Picturesque Tour through Holland, Brabant, and part of France, in 1789," gives the following

account of the inventor of Printing, when describing the city of Haerlem.

"Haerlem claims the invention of the art of printing. It is attributed to Lawrence Koster, an alderman of this city, in 1440; whose house is yet standing in the market-place, opposite the church. Amusing himself one day in the neighboring wood, with cutting the bark of trees into the letters that formed the initials of his name, he is said to have laid them on paper, and falling asleep, when he awoke, observed, that from the dew, their form was impressed on the paper. This accident induced him to make further experiment: he next cut his letters in wood, and, dipping them in a glutinous liquid, impressed them on paper, which he found an improvement; and, soon after, substituting leaden and pewter letters, erected a press in his house; thus laying the foundation of this noble art, which has thence gradually risen to its present excellence. —The art, it is said, was stolen from him by his servant, John Faustus, who conveyed it to Mentz, and, from the novelty of the discovery, soon acquired the title of Doctor and Conjurer. The original specimens are now shown at the library in the Town Hall. The first is on a leaf of parchment, and the second and third on paper, printed only on one side, and the corner left blank for capitals. At the top are wooden cuts, representing the creation, and, as it is called, Lucifer's Fall." —pp. 109—111.

No. VIII. p. 254.—*On Telescopes; with a brief notice of a* New Reflecting Telescope, constructed by the Author.

It is doubtful to what particular individual we owe the invention of the telescope. Some have supposed that Roger Bacon and Baptista Porta invented this instrument. Borelli ascribes the invention to Zacharias Jansen, a native of Middleburg. Perhaps the account given in the article to which this note refers, and which is stated by a variety of authors, may be as probable as any other. It is certain that the telescope was not in general use until the beginning of the 17th century, and that no discoveries in the heavens were made with it, till the year 1609.

There are two kinds of telescopes, *Refracting* and *Reflecting*. In refracting telescopes, the rays of light pass through convex or concave glasses or lenses. The object-glass is always convex, and forms an image or picture of the object in an inverted position in its focus; which image is viewed by the eye-glass; and the magnifying power is in the proportion

of the focal distance of the object-glass to that of the eye glass. The focal distance of a convex glass may be ascertained by holding it in the rays of the sun, opposite to a piece of white paper, and measuring the distance between the glass and the white spot, or burning point, formed on the paper.—An Astronomical telescope for viewing celestial objects may be constructed with only two glasses. If an object-glass, 30 inches focal distance, be fixed in the end of a tube, and an eye-glass of one inch focus be placed at the other end, at the distance of 31 inches from the object-glass, a telescope will be formed, which will magnify in the proportion of one to thirty, or 30 times; that is, objects seen through such a telescope will appear thirty times larger in diameter, or thirty times nearer than to the naked eye. By such an instrument, the inequalities on the moon's surface, and some of the satellites of Jupiter may be perceived; but when directed to land objects they will appear inverted, or turned upside down. In order to reverse the appearance of the object, two other eye-glasses are required; or, if a *concave* eye-glass of a similar focus be placed at 29 inches from the object-glass, the object will appear in its natural position, and the magnifying power will be the same; but the field of view will be much smaller.—Astronomical telescopes of this construction were formerly made of 120, and even of 200 feet in length, and were used without a tube; the object-glass being placed on the top of a long pole; but these are now entirely superseded by *Achromatic* telescopes. In the achromatic telescope, the object-glass is compounded of two, and sometimes of three lenses, placed close to each other, one of which is a double concave of white flint glass, and the other a double convex of crown glass. By this means an image is formed without being blended with the prismatic colors; and it will, therefore, bear a much greater magnifying power than a common refractor.—An achromatic telescope four feet long, will magnify objects as much as a common refractor 100 feet long.

In *Reflecting* telescopes the images of objects are formed by speculums or mirrors, instead of lenses. They are of two kinds, the *Gregorian* and the *Newtonian*. The Gregorian reflector consists of a tube in which a concave mirror, having a hole in its centre, is placed. The rays of light from distant objects falling upon this mirror, form an image before it, in its centre or focus. This image is intercepted by a smaller mirror, which reflects it back through the hole in the large mirror, to an eye-glass, through which the observer views the object. In the Newtonian Reflector, a plane mirror, placed at an angle

of 45 degrees, is substituted in place of the small mirror in the Gregorian construction, and the observer looks down upon the object through the side of the tube. Dr. Brewster has suggested an interesting improvement in the construction of this instrument, which is described in *The Edinburgh Ency.* Art. *Optics*, p. 644.

New Reflector.—About three years ago, the Author commenced a series of experiments on Reflecting Telescopes; and has lately constructed several on a new plan and principle. In this construction, there is no *small* speculum, either plane, convex, or concave; there is no tube, except a short one of two or three inches in length, for holding the speculum.—The observer sits with his back to the object, and views the image formed by the speculum through an eye-piece, which requires to be nicely directed and adjusted. Three or four instruments of this construction have been fitted up, with specula of 5, 8, 16, 28, 35, and 49 inches focal distance.—One of them, having a speculum of eight inches focus, and 2 inches diameter, with a terrestrial eye-piece, magnifying about 25 times, forms an excellent parlour telescope for viewing land objects, and exhibits them in a brilliant and novel aspect. When compared with a Gregorian of the same size and magnifying power, the quantity of light upon the object appears nearly double, and the image *is equally distinct.* It represents objects in their natural colors, without that dingy and yellowish tinge which appears when looking through a Gregorian.—Another of these instruments, having a speculum of 28 inches focal distance, and an eye-piece producing a magnifying power of about 100 times, serves as an excellent astronomical telescope. By this instrument the belts and satellites of Jupiter, the ring of Saturn, and the mountains and cavities of the Moon may be contemplated with great ease and distinction. By placing the pedestal on the floor of the apartment, when the object is at a high elevation, we can view celestial phenomena with the same ease as if we were sitting at a writing-desk reading a book. With a magnifying power of about 40 or 50 times applied to this telescope, terrestrial objects appear extremely bright and well defined. A speculum of 49 inches focal distance, and 6½ inches diameter, has lately been fitted up on the same principle. With magnifying powers of from 100 to 160 times, it exhibits distinct and interesting views of the Moon's surface, and of the ring of Saturn, and with a

power of 56 times it affords a beautiful view of land objects. The specula used in these instuments are far from being good; being of a yellowish color, and scarcely half polished, and having large holes in the centre; as they were originally intended for Gregorian Reflectors; yet the brightness of vision approaches nearly to that of Achromatic Telescopes. The experiments which have been made on this subject demonstrate, that a *tube* is not necessary for a Reflecting Telescope, when viewing either celestial or terrestrial objects; and, therefore, this construction of the instrument may be denominated, THE AERIAL REFLECTOR. The simplicity of the construction, and the excellence of the performance of these instruments, have been much admired by several scientific gentlemen to whom they have been exhibited. A *Caveat* has lately been lodged at the Patent Office, in the view of taking out a Patent for this construction of Reflecting telescopes; and a more detailed account of it will probably soon appear in some of the Scientific Journals.

In the System of OPTICS, lately published in the Edinburg Encyclopædia, (one of the most luminous and comprehensive treatises which has yet appeared on this subject,) the writer, in his introduction to the account of Dr. Brewster's improvement on the Newtonian Telescope, remarks:—"If we could dispense with the use of the small specula in telescopes of moderate length, by inclining the great speculum, and using an oblique, and, consequently, a *distorted* reflection, as proposed first by La Maire, we should consider the Newtonian Telescope as perfect; and on a large scale, or when the instrument exceeds 20 feet, it has undoubtedly this character, as nothing can be more simple than to magnify, by a single eye-glass, the image formed by a single speculum.—As the *front view* is quite *impracticable;* and, indeed, *has never been attempted* in instruments of a small size, it becomes of great practical consequence to remove as much as possible the evils which arise from the use of a small speculum," &c.—The instruments noticed above have effectuated the desirable object alluded to by this respectable writer; and the principle of the construction is neither that of Dr. Herschel's *front view*, nor does it coincide with that proposed by La Maire, which seems to have been a mere hint, which was never put into execution.

No. IX. p. 257.—*On Steam Navigation.*

THE application of steam, as a mechanical power for impel-

ling vessels along rivers and seas, is one of the most brilliant and useful achievements of art which distinguish the present age, and seems destined to produce an important and interesting change in the general intercourse of nations. From the "Report of a Committee of Parliament," published in 1822, it appears, that the first application of steam to the impelling of vessels, was made by an Englishman, of the name of HULL, who, in 1736, obtained a patent for the invention of a Steam-boat, to be moved with a crank and paddles. But it was only in 1807, that the invention was fairly brought into practical use, by Mr. FULTON, an American, who had the assistance and advice of Mr. BELL, a Scots engineer. There are now, according to Mr. PERKINS' statement, about 300 Steam-boats on the rivers, bays, and coasts of the United States, varying in their size from 100 to 700 tons. In Britain, the first successful application of steam to vessels, was made by the above mentioned Mr. BELL,* who built the Comet of 25 tons, and four horses' power, to ply on the Clyde. There are now reckoned about 150 Steam-boats, from 40 to 500 tons, plying on the rivers and coasts of the British isles. Glasgow, which had the honor of introducing steam navigation on this side of the Atlantic, is still the seat of its greatest activity. According to a statement given in the "Edinburgh Philosophical Journal," published in July, 1822, there were then no less than 36 Steam-boats, of various sizes, plying on the Clyde. Some of these, besides performing regular voyages to Inverary, Campbelton, Belfast, Liverpool, and other places, are also performing tours, during the summer months, to the Giant's Causeway, Staffa, Skye, and other ports of the Western Isles, and to Inverness by the Caledonian Canal. Steam-boats are also plying between Aberdeen and Leith—between Newhaven and Aberdour, Bruntisland, Kinghorn, Kirkaldy, and Dysart; and to Queensferry, Alloa, Grangemouth and Sterling—between Leith and London—Dover and Calais. One has been plying for several years on Loch-Lomond, which enables the traveller, at a small expense, to take an interesting view of the diversified scenery of that beautiful lake. Five are just now plying on the Tay; two of which, with engines of 30 and 40 horse powers, and fitted up with elegant accommo-

* It is much to be regretted, and it is certainly not congenial to the liberal spirit of the age, that this gentleman, who was among the first inventors of steam navigation, and who has done so much to promote its success in the neighborhood of Glasgow, has never received any public reward for his exertions, and has been left to sink into a state approaching to poverty.

dation, ply daily between Perth and Dundee ; each of them, during most of the summer months, transporting nearly a hundred passengers at every trip.

Steam navigation, though less understood on the Continent than with us, is now beginning to make considerable progress. There are eight Steam-boats on the Garonne, and several on the Seine. There are two on the Lake of Geneva, and two are about to be established on the Lake Constance, and there are, besides, one or two on the Danube. It is likely, that in the course of a few years such conveyances will be established on all our Friths and Rivers, and the period is, no doubt, hastening on, when excursions will be taken, in such vehicles, between Europe and America. A Steam-boat of 700 tons burden, and 100 horse power, has sailed regularly, summer and winter, for three or four years, between New York and New Orleans, a distance of 2000 miles, in an open sea, exposed to great storms ; and, by many, she is preferred to the packets, not only for the certainty of making shorter voyages, but *on account of greater safety.* In America, steam vessels are fitted up with every accommodation and elegancy which art can devise ; so as to produce, if possible, as great a variety of enjoyment to passengers on sea, as on land. Mr. Church, the American Consul in France, has invented a paddle, which revolves on the paddle wheel, by very simple mechanism, which is found to save power. In the United States, a new mode of constructing cabins has been lately introduced, so as to place them beyond the reach of injury from explosions of the boiler. A steam vessel of a large size has lately been fitted up, which is intended to sail between London and Calcutta.

" Steam vessels have been built in this country from 10 to 500 tons, and from 3 or 4 to 110 horse power. The length of the City of Edinburgh, on the upper deck, is 143 feet ; and some have lately been constructed of still larger dimensions. The American steam-boats are larger than ours, and are much more used for the conveyance of merchandise. The Frontinac, which plies on the Canadian side of Lake Ontario, is 170 feet long on deck, and 32 feet broad ; and the Chancellor Livingston, which plies on the Hudson, is of the same size. The velocity aimed at is generally 8 or 9 miles an hour. The proportion is, on an average, about one horse power for every four tons of burden, computed in the usual way. The velocity is found to be nearly as the square root of the power, so that an 80 horse power engine will produce only *twice* the velocity of one of 20 horse power. Something

depends also on the make and size of the vessel. The "Sovereign," of 210 tons, and 80 horse power, goes $9\frac{3}{4}$ miles an hour in still water; and the "James Watt," of 448 tons, and 100 horse power, is stated to go ten miles. For the paddle-boards, the rule is, that 3-10ths of a square foot of surface should be immersed in the water for each horse power. The paddle wheels vary from 10 to 15 feet in diameter, dip from 12 to 20 inches in the water, and have about one foot in breadth for each 10 horse power. Mr. Gladstone affirms, that so much power is wasted in displacing the water by the stroke of the board, that the velocity of the ship is only about one half of that of the outer surface of the paddle-wheel.

"There are two sources of apprehension in steam-boats—fire, and the bursting of the boiler. With regard to the latter, when the boiler is of low pressure, it is satisfactorily established that not the smallest danger exists. And in the best constructed vessels, the danger from fire is completely obviated, by separating the furnace from the sides of the vessels by five inches of water."—The power of steam is now rendered subservient to the breaking of stones for the construction of roads. The stones are put into a kind of hopper above, and pushed down with a rake, and the machine is worked by a rotatory motion of one horse power; and will break a ton of hard pebbles, completely, in from six to eight minutes. A steam machine has also been invented for the dressing of woollen cloth, which does as much work in 50 minutes as two men could do in two days. *Mon. Mag. Aug.* 1823, p. 71.—A steam carriage, for conveying goods and passengers on land, was lately constructing by Mr. Griffiths. Its rate of motion, on common roads is estimated at five miles an hour, at an average; about three miles when going up-hill, and above seven when running down. But pecuniary embarrassments, or other impediments, have, hitherto, prevented the completion of his design.

Mr. Perkins has lately made improvements on the steam-engine, which promise to carry its powers to a high degree of perfection. The engine he has lately constructed is calculated to a ten horse power, though the cylinder is no more than two inches in diameter, and 18 inches long, with a stroke of only 12 inches. Although the space occupied by the engine is not more than six feet by eight, yet Mr. P. considers the apparatus (with the exception of the working cylinder and piston) is perfectly sufficient for a thirty horse engine. When the engine performs full work, it consumes only two bushels of coal in the day. Mr. Perkins has also announced a discovery still more extraordinary, viz. that he has been able "to arrest the

heat, after it has performed its mechanical functions, and actually pump it back to the generator, to unite with a fresh portion of water, and renew its useful labors." A particular account of Perkins' engine, accompanied with an engraving, is given in the Edin. Philos. Journal, No. 17, for July 1823. The pretensions of Mr. Perkins, however, have not yet been so fully substantiated by experiment as to satisfy the anxious expectation of the public.

An interesting Report has lately been published of a series of experiments, made with *a new steam engine*, invented by an American machinist, called the *capillary steam engine*. Three great objects are said to be accomplished by this invention, *lightness*, *safety*, and *economy of fuel*. In an engine calculated for a four horse power, the *generator*, is formed of a copper tube $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter, and 100 feet long, which weighs about 16 lbs. It is arranged in coils, one above another, in the form of a sugar loaf, 30 inches high; the bottom coil being 18 inches in diameter, and the top one considerably less. The wood is prepared as is usual for a stove, and put within the coils. The *steam cylinder* is formed of sheet copper, three inches in diameter, 27 inches in stroke, and, with all its appendages, weighs about 25 lbs. It has been ascertained, that the generator and main cylinder, with their contents and appendages, exclusive of fuel, need not weigh more than 20 lbs. to the horse power. *No harm can be done by the bursting of boilers* —even a safety-valve is considered as useless. In the course of the experiments, the experimenters several times burst the tube; but, so far from doing any injury, it could not always be perceived by the spectators. To ascertain what may be done towards *aerial navigation*, by steam, experiments were made on the power of wings in the air, and on the power necessary to work them. The result is, that it requires a horse power to carry 30 lbs. in the air; so that a flying engine, to be worked by charcoal, would weigh about 30 lbs. to the horse power, wings, condenser and fuel included. It was also ascertained by experiments and calculations, that a balloon could be made to carry a man with an engine, which would push it at the rate of 15 miles an hour in the air. A more particular detail of these experiments may be seen in the "London Mechanic's Magazine," No. 60, for 16th October, 1824.

No. X. p. 316.—*Strictures on a certain sentiment respecting the Work of Human Redemption.*

THE sentiment referred to in this paragraph, "That there never was, nor ever will be, through all the ages of eternity

so wonderful a display of the Divine glory, as in the cross of Christ," has been reiterated a thousand times, in sermons and in systems of divinity, and is still repeated by certain preachers as if it were an incontrovertible axiom, which ought never to be called in question; and is, no doubt, intended to magnify the Divine attributes, and the work of redemption.* But it is nothing more than a presumptuous assumption, which has a tendency to *limit* the perfections of Deity, and to present a partial and distorted view of the economy of human redemption. For, in the first place, *it has no foundation in Scripture.* There is not a single passage from which it can be legitimately deduced. The *onus probandi*, on this point,

* It is not important to determine how often the sentiment here expressed has been "reiterated in sermons and systems of Divinity." We cannot, however, believe that it has been repeated with the same frequency, as the author's language seems to imply. That there are instances, in which it was designed to express all the meaning here attributed to it, cannot be denied. But why may it not have been sometimes used to distinguish the work of mediation from all the other favors, which God has conferred on our race? In his History of Redemption, p. 342, President Edwards says, "from what has been said, one may argue, that the work of Redemption is the greatest of all God's works, of which we have any notice, and it is the end of all his other works." This view of the subject accords with the scriptures. Though it cannot be asserted, that in a single instance they directly affirm the work of redemption to be the greatest of all the works of God, yet they give it such an importance and prominency, as are conceded to no other of His dispensations. In this light the Apostles seem to have regarded it. Paul counted all the distinctions and honors and advantages, which he had acquired amongst the Jews, as loss in comparison with the glory of the Gospel. He went even farther. He declared that he counted ALL THINGS but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. In this view of the subject there is no presumption and no limitation of the "divine perfections and operations." It has no tendency either to damp the hopes, or obscure the prospects of immortal beings.

On the other hand who, that is not presumptuous beyond endurance, will suppose, that he now understands the full extent of the love of Christ and its bearings on all the other divine operations? Who will dare to assert, that this theme will not be sufficient forever to employ the meditations and the songs of the redeemed? Has any one ascertained, that it is so limited, as to be soon exhausted? On these topics the author is happily silent; or rather he "pronounces nothing decisively;" but affirms, that were he "to hazard a conjecture," he should say, "that the converse of the proposition" under consideration "is true." But for ourselves "we feel chained down to an obscure corner of God's domains," and possess no light except that which he has given us. In our present condition *we dare* not launch with the author into the ocean of conjecture. Guided by the revelation which God has made, we are compelled to regard the work of Redemption as the greatest of all the divine works of which we have any knowledge; and we are satisfied, that the developement of the relations and bearings and effects of this stupendous work will be sufficient to employ all our powers of comprehension, and ever to minister to us new and constant delight. *Am. Editor.*

rests with those who make the assertion. A gentleman, when lately conversing on this subject, brought forward the following interrogation, as a demonstrative argument in proof of the position in question: "Is not Redemption declared in Scripture to be *the chief of all the works of God?*" but he was not a little surprised, when he was informed, that the passage which he had partly misquoted, is applied to the Behemoth or the Elephant, as stated in Job, xl. 19.—2dly, the assertion is as presumptuous as it is unfounded. It takes for granted, that we know all the events which have already happened, and which are now taking place throughout the whole range of God's Universal Empire. This empire appears unbounded; and that portion of it which we can minutely explore, is but as a point in comparison of the whole. But before we can, on good grounds, hazard such an assertion as that under consideration, we must have explored *all* the dispensations of God, through every portion of his vast dominions; and be able to form a comparison between the different displays of Divine glory, made to all the different classes of intellectual beings, under the government of the Creator. And who, among the sons of Adam, can lay claim to such high qualifications for pronouncing so sweeping a decision on this point? 3dly, *It sets limits to the Divine perfections and operations.* For although it could be proved, (which it cannot be,) that no such displays have hitherto been made to any other beings, yet who can take upon him to assert, that displays of Divine perfection far more glorious and astonishing, will not be exhibited during the countless ages of eternity which are yet to come? To set limits to the operations of Almighty Power and Boundless Benevolence, during the lapse of infinite duration, is not the province of any created intelligence, and far less of man, who stands so low in the scale of universal being. 4thly, *It tends to damp the hopes and prospects of immortal beings*, when looking forward to an interminable existence. For this sentiment leads them to conclude, that they are already acquainted with the greatest display of Divine glory which can be made; and that whatever scenes of wonder may be exhibited in the future world, they must, of course, be all inferior to this, in point of extent and grandeur.

The Redemption of the human race, as displayed in the Christian Revelation, is a theme sufficiently grand, astonishing, and interesting, to command the attention of all who are convinced that they belong to an apostate race of intelligences, and to excite the admiration and gratitude of all who have

experienced its benefits; and it stands in no need of such unfounded and extravagant assertions, to display its riches and glory. "Will a man speak deceitfully for God? Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?"—We pronounce nothing decisively on this subject. We feel ourselves chained down to an obscure corner of God's dominions, to be in the very infancy of our knowledge, and withal, to be connected with a race of beings whose "understandings are darkened by reason of sin;" and are therefore unable to pronounce an infallible decision on what God will, or will not do. Were we to hazard a conjecture on this subject, we would say, that the converse of the proposition under consideration, is more probable than the proposition itself. We can conceive worlds ten thousand times more populous than ours, and peopled with a higher order of intellectual beings, towards whom a similar display of Benevolence and Mercy, were it necessary, may be made; and, therefore, in point of *the extent* of its objects, we can conceive the Love of God more illustriously manifested than even to the inhabitants of our globe. But whether such an event shall ever take place, it would be presumption in us to determine. For the thoughts and the ways of God as far transcend ours, "as the heavens are high above the earth." It demands our highest tribute of grateful adoration, that the Almighty condescended to "regard us in our low estate," and to deliver us from the moral degradation into which we had fallen; but, surely, it would be unreasonable to conclude, from this consideration, that, of all the rational tribes which people the universe, MAN is the only favorite of the most High, "when thousand worlds are round." Though myriads of other intelligences were to share in similar favors, it would not lessen the happiness conferred on us, nor ought it in the least, to detract from our admiration of "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There are a great many other vague and untenable notions which are entertained and reiterated by certain commentators and divines, as indisputable axioms, which it would be of importance to the cause of Religion to discard; such as—that angels are pure *immaterial* substances*—that they were formed on the first day of the Mosaic creation—that the *wisdom* of God is no where so illustriously displayed through-

* In the Scriptures angels are called *Spirits*. And till some evidence is offered of their materiality we shall see no reason to abandon the opinion, that they are *pure spirits*.—*Ed.*

out the universe as in the scheme of redemption*—that the chief employment of the future world will be to pry into the *mysteries* of salvation†—that sin is an *infinite* evil‡—that the whole material universe was brought into existence *at the same time* with our earth—that the Creator ceased to create any new order of beings in the universe, after arranging the fabric of our globe—that the whole system of material nature in heaven and earth, will be destroyed at the period of the dissolution of our world—that our thoughts and affections should be completely detached from all *created* things, &c. &c.—Several vague notions of this description are founded on the false assumption, that the globe we inhabit, and the rational beings that have appeared on its surface from age to age, are the *chief objects* of God's Superintendence and Care—and, that the Scriptures are *the only medium* through which we can view the plans and operations of the Deity—assumptions, which are contrary to reason, which are unwarranted in Revelation, nay, which are directly contradicted in numerous passages of Scripture, some of which have already been referred to in the course of this volume. It would be of

* To show that it is important to discard this sentiment, the author ought at least to have stated some good reason for believing it to be without foundation. Until something more decisive of this point shall be made to appear, there cannot be the least occasion to abandon the sentiment in question.—*Ed.*

† Here substantially the same reply may be made as in the preceding instance. Prove, that this will not be the chief employment of heaven—Show, that any thing else will, for the most part, occupy the attention of the spirits of just men made perfect in glory, and the sentiment under consideration will be readily renounced. Till then we shall claim the right to believe, and maintain, that the employment of the redeemed in glory will consist, to a great extent, in beholding, admiring, and adoring Him, who hath loved them and died for them.—*Ed.*

‡ Infinite is once used in the scriptures to qualify the term iniquity. Job xxii. 5. *Is not thy wickedness great and thine iniquities infinite?* But not to insist on perhaps a too literal interpretation of the term, it will be sufficient to show what it is ordinarily used to denote.

Some authors, regarding only the very limited faculties and powers of human beings, deem it impossible, that any of their deeds can be an *infinite evil.*

Others, considering only the infinity of the Being against whom sin is committed, find no difficulty in convincing themselves, that *it is* an *infinite evil.*

There is also a third class, who taking the word of God for their guide, and learning that sin exposes men to *everlasting punishment*, do not hesitate to denominate that an *infinite evil*, which brings on its guilty victim sufferings infinite in duration. Understood in this last sense, we can feel no obligation to reject it. It must, however, be admitted that it is not always used in this manner, and that it is sometimes an occasion of ambiguity.—*Ed.*

essential service to the cause of Christianity, that its doctrines, facts, and moral requisitions were uniformly exhibited in their native simplicity and grandeur, without being obscured and distorted by the vague and extravagant representations with which they are too frequently blended by injudicious minds.

No. XI.

As authority has a considerable degree of weight on some minds, I shall conclude with an extract on the subject of this volume, from that respectable and enlightened divine, Dr. DWIGHT, late President of Yale College:—"The works of God were by him intended to be, and are, in fact, manifestations of himself; proofs of his character, presence, and agency. In this light he requires men continually to regard them: and to refuse this regard is considered by him as grossly wicked, and highly deserving of punishment, Psalm xxviii. 5. Isa. v. 12—14. I am apprehensive, that even good men are prone to pay less attention to the works of creation and providence than piety demands, and the Scriptures require. We say and hear so much concerning the insufficiency of these works to unfold the character of God, and the nature of genuine religion, that we are prone to consider them as almost uninstructive in moral things, and, in a great measure, useless to the promotion of piety. This, however, is a palpable and dangerous error. The works *alone*, without the aid of the Scriptures, would, I acknowledge, be far less instructive than they now are, and utterly insufficient to guide us in the way of righteousness. The Scriptures were designed to be a comment on these works; to explain their nature, and to show us the agency, purposes, wisdom, and goodness of God in their formation. Thus explained, thus illuminated, they become means of knowledge, very extensive and eminently useful. He who does not find in the various, beautiful, sublime, awful, and astonishing objects presented to us in Creation and Providence, irresistible and glorious reasons, for admiring, adoring, loving, and praising his Creator, has not a claim to evangelical piety."—*System of Theology*, vol. iii. p. 477.

No. XII.—*List of Popular Works on the different Sciences treated of in this Volume, with occasional Remarks.*

SELECT BOOKS OF NATURAL HISTORY.

"Goldsmith's History of the Earth, and animated nature," with notes by T. Brown, Esq. published at Manchester, 6

vols. 8vo. The copious notes appended to this edition, contain an account of the latest discoveries, and form a valuable addition to the original work.—"The Gallery of Nature, and Art," by Dr. Mason Good, and others, 6 vols. 8vo.—"*Spectacle de la Nature*," or, Nature Displayed, 7 vols. 12mo.—"Nature Displayed," by Dr. Simeon Shaw, 3 vols. 8vo. or in 6 vols. 12mo. This work, though chiefly a compilation, embodies a great variety of interesting and popular descriptions of the most remarkable facts in the system of nature, which are illustrated with numerous engravings, both plain and colored.—Clarke's "Hundred Wonders of the World," 1 vol. 12mo. and Platt's "Book of Curiosities," contain a number of interesting selections on this subject.—Smellie's "Philosophy of Natural History," 2 vols. 4to. and his translation of "Buffon's Natural History."—Works entitled, "Systems" and "Elements" of "Natural History," are numerous; but the greatest part of them is confined to descriptions of the forms, habits, and instinct of animals. On this department of natural science, a work is just now in course of publication, by the celebrated CUVIER, entitled "*The Animal Kingdom*," with engravings, chiefly from the living subjects in the Museum of Natural History at Paris.—A popular and comprehensive History of the facts which have been ascertained respecting the earth, the atmosphere, the meteors, the heavens, &c. calculated for general readers, and interspersed with appropriate moral and religious reflections, is still a *desideratum*. The facts of Natural History, next to the facts recorded in the Sacred Volume, are the first subjects to which the minds of the young should be directed in the course of a general education.

SELECT BOOKS ON GEOGRAPHY.

Pinkerton's Modern Geography, 2 vols. 4to. and the Abridgment, 1 vol. 8vo.—Guthrie's Geographical Grammar.—The Glasgow Geography, in 5 vols. 8vo. This work comprehends an immense mass of information, on the historical and descriptive parts of Geography. It also contains comprehensive compends of Astronomy, Geology, Meteorology, &c.—Malte Brun's "System of Geography," 8vo. The English translation of this work, when completed, will comprise the fullest and most comprehensive view of Universal Geography that has yet appeared in our language, including details of the most recent discoveries. Five volumes of the

English translation have already appeared. The first volume contains a luminous and comprehensive outline of the science of Geology, and Physical and Mathematical Geography.—Myer's "System of Modern Geography," with maps, views, engravings representing costumes, &c. 2 large vols. 4to.—Cooke's "System of Universal Geography," in 2 very large quarto vols. closely printed, contains a great variety of interesting sketches in relation to *Descriptive* Geography, extracted from the writings of modern Voyagers and Travellers: the details of incidents, &c. being related, for the most par in the words of the respective authors from whom the information is collected.—Winterbotham's "Geographical and Historical view of the United States of America, &c." four vols. 8vo.—Morse's "American Geography," 8vo.—Goldsmith's "Geography on a popular plan," contains an interesting account of the manners and customs of nations, for the entertainment and instruction of the young, illustrated with above 60 engravings. Of smaller systems, there is a great abundance in the English language, but most of them are extremely deficient, particularly in what relates to *General* Geography.—On *Sacred* Geography, Well's Geography, modernized by the Editor of Calmet's Dictionary, is the most complete work of its kind.—On *Physical* or *General* Geography—Playfair's System of Geography, vol. 1. and Varenius's General Geography. A MODERN *system* of General Geography, in a separate form, on the plan of Varenius, is a *desideratum*.—Edin. Ency. Art. Geography—Sup. to Ency. Brit. Art. *Physical Geography*, &c. &c. Books of Voyages and Travels, generally contain the most circumstantial details of the physical aspects of the different countries, and of the dispositions and customs of their inhabitants; and present to the view of the Christian Philanthropist, those facts and incidents, from which the *moral* state and character of the various tribes of human beings may be inferred. The following works contain comprehensive abridgments of the most celebrated voyages and travels.—"Pinkerton's General Collection of Voyages and Travels in all parts of the world," 17 vols. 4to.—"Mavor's Voyages," &c. 28 vols. 18mo.—"The World Displayed," 18 vols. 18mo.—"Philip's Collection of Voyages and Travels," &c.

The following are among the most respectable modern publications on this subject, arranged according to the different quarters of the World. ASIA.—"Valencia's Travels in India, Arabia," &c.—"Porter's Travels in Georgia, Armenia," &c.—"Golownin's Travels in Japan." "Staunton's Account of

Macartney's Embassy to China." "Raffle's Travels in Java." "Clark's Travels in Asia Minor, and the Holy Land." "Chateaubriand's Travels in Palestine." "Ali Bey's Travels in Arabia."—"Morier's Travels through Persia," &c. AFRICA.—"Lyon's Travels in Northern Africa." Burckhard's Travels in Nubia. Bruce's Travels in Abyssinia. Salt's Travels in Abyssinia. Bowdich, Hutton, and Dupuis' Account of *Ashantee*. Leigh's Jour. in Egypt. Belzoni's Travels in Egypt. Sonini's Travels in Egypt. Barrow's, Burchell's, and Campbell's Travels in Southern Africa, &c. &c. AMERICA.—Howison's Sketches of Upper Canada. Fearon's Sketches of the United States. Miss Wright's Views of Society in the United States. Humboldt's Travels in South America. Duncan's Travels in the United States. Luccock's, Vidal's, Kosters's, and Hall's Travels in South America, &c. EUROPE.—Henderson's and Mackenzie's Travels in Iceland. —Thompson's Travels in Sweden.—Carr's Travels in Russia, Denmark, &c.—-Pallas' Travels in Russia.—-Wraxall's, Neale's, Coxe's, and Lemaistre's Tours through France, Switzerland, Germany, &c.—Bourgoing's and Jacob's Travels in Spain.—Brydon's Tour in Sicily, &c.—Von Buch's Travels in Norway and Lapland.—Cochrane's Travels in Siberia, &c.—Cook's, Anson's, Bryon's, Perouse's, and Bouganville's Voyages round the World, &c.—Prior's Universal Traveller, 1 thick vol. 12mo, closely printed with one hundred engravings.

SELECT BOOKS ON GEOLOGY.

Kirwan's "Mineralogy," and his "Geological Essays."—De Luc's "Geology," and his "Geological Travels."—Parkinson's "Organic Remains of a former World," 3 vols. 4to. —"The Fossils of the South Downs, or Illustrations of the Geology of Sussex, by G. Mantel, F. L. S." The preliminary Essay to this splendid work, contains several excellent remarks respecting the connexion of Geology with Religion, which are calculated to advance the interests of both.—Cuvier's "Essay on the Theory of the Earth," with illustrations by Professor Jameson; 4th edition.—Playfair's illustrations of the Huttonian Theory of the Earth.—Transactions of the Geological and Wernerian Societies.—Jameson's Mineralogy.—Buckland's Account of the Discovery of a Den of Hyenas in a cavern in Yorkshire.—Philips' "Outlines of Mineralogy and Geology," 12mo. This last work forms a good introduction to the study of Geology, for those who are just

commencing their inquiries on this subject. The object of this science, in the mean time, should be chiefly to *the collecting of facts* in reference to the structure of the earth, and the changes it has undergone. The exterior aspect of our globe, and its internal recesses, must be still more extensively explored, before any theory of the earth can be established on a broad and solid foundation. It should be left to future ages to build a system with the materials we are now preparing.

POPULAR WORKS ON ASTRONOMY.

Brewster's "Ferguson's Astronomy," 2 vols. 8vo. with a vol. of plates. The notes and supplementary chapters of this work, written by Dr. Brewster, contain a full and comprehensive detail of all the modern discoveries in this science.—"Bonnycastle's Introduction to Astronomy," 1 vol. 8vo.—La Place's "System of the World," 2 vols. 8vo. Dr. Olinthus Gregory's Astronomy, 1 vol. 8vo.—Mrs. Bryan's "System of Astronomy," 8vo.—Dr. Mylne's "Elementary Treatise on Astronomy," 8vo.—Adam's "Astronomical and Geographical Essays," 8vo.—Philips' "Eight Familiar Lectures on Astronomy," 12mo.—Squire's "Grammar of Astronomy," 1 thick vol. 18mo. closely printed and illustrated with 35 plates.—The "Wonders of the Heavens," 12mo. This work contains a popular view of the principal facts of Astronomy, and is illustrated with 50 elegant engravings, of a variety of interesting objects connected with the scenery of the heavens; but its discussions are too frequently blended with the peculiarities of a modern physical theory.—Martin's "Gentleman and Lady's Philosophy," vol. 1.—Derham's "Astro-Theology," and Whiston's "Astronomical principles of Religion," 8vo.—Baxter's "Matho," 2 vols. &c.—An elegant and comprehensive outline of the leading facts of Astronomy, in their relation to revealed Religion, will be found in Dr. Chalmers' "Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in connection with the Modern Astronomy," 8vo.—The general reader in commencing his study of this science, will find Bonnycastle's "Introduction" a very interesting work. It is written in an elegant and animated style, and is agreeably interspersed with a number of appropriate reflections; but it is deficient in the detail of modern discoveries. He might next proceed to the perusal of Ferguson, Gregory, Squire, &c. La Place's work contains a beautiful exposition of the Newtonian System, but it is glaringly deficient in a reference to the Wisdom and Agency of a Supreme Intelligence. "An undevout astronomer is mad." Baxter's "Matho," contains a popular and

interesting view of this subject and forms a striking contrast to the apathy of La Place, who carefully keeps out of view the agency of the Creator—the main design of this author being to connect the phenomena of the heavens and the earth with the attributes of Deity, and the high destination of immortal minds. Though this work passed through three editions, it does not seem to have been appreciated according to its merits. As it has now become scarce, a new edition, with *notes*, containing a detail of modern discoveries, might be an acceptable present to the public. Those who wish to prosecute this subject to a greater extent, may be referred to "Long's Astro nomy," 2 vols. 4to.—Robinson's "Mechanical Philosophy," vol. 1.—Vince's "Complete System of Astronomy," 3 vols. 4to.—"La Lande *Astronomie*," 3 volumns 4to.—and Biot's "Traite Elementaire d'Astronomie Physique." A comprehensive work on *Descriptive Astronomy*, detailing, in a popular manner, all the facts which have been ascertained respecting the scenery of the heavens, accompanied with a variety of striking delineations, and interspersed with appropriate moral reflections, accommodated to the general reader, is a *desideratum.*

SELECT BOOKS ON NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

Hauy's "Elementary treatise on Natural Philosophy," translated by Dr. O. Gregory, 2 vols. 8vo. This translation contains a number of valuable notes by the translator.—Ferguson's "Lectures on Select Subjects in Mechanics," &c. by Dr. Brewster, 2 vols. 8vo. with a vol. of plates. The *Appendix* to this work, by Dr. Brewster, contains a mass of valuable information on Mechanics, Hydraulics, Dialling, and the construction of *Optical Instruments;* besides a variety of illustrative notes interspersed through the body of the work. A new edition of this work, comprising a detailed account of the recent discoveries in Experimental Philosophy, has been lately published.—Nicholson's "Introduction to Natural Philosophy," 2 vols. 8vo.—Cavallo's "Complete Treatise on Natural and Experimental Philosophy," 4 vols. 8vo.—Martin's "Philosophia Britannica," 3 vols. 8vo. His "Gentleman and Lady's Philosophy," 3 vols. 8vo. and his Philosophical Grammar," 1 vol. 8vo.—Gregory's "Economy of Nature, 3 vols. 8vo. and his "Lectures on Experimental Philosophy, Astronomy, and Chemistry," 2 vols. 12mo.—Joyce's "Letters on Experimental Philosophy," 2 vols. 12mo.—and his "Scientific Dialogues," 6 vols. 18mo.—Adams' "Lectures on Natural and Experimental Philosophy," 4 vols.

8vo. with a vol. of plates.—Young's "Lectures on Natural Philosophy," 2 vols. 8vo.—Walker's system of "Familiar Philosophy," 4to. in 12 lectures, with 47 quarto engravings.—Conversations on Natural Philosophy, by the Author of Conversations on Chemistry, 1 thick vol. 12mo. with 23 engravings.—Blair's "Grammar of Natural and Experimental Philosophy," especially the late editions, contains (at a small price) a comprehensive view of the principal departments of Philosophy, including Astronomy, Geology, Chemistry, Meteorology, &c.—Euler's "Letters to a German Princess," 2 vols. 8vo. contains a popular view of the most interesting subjects connected with Natural and Experimental Philosophy, Logic, and Ethics. This work is distinguished by a vein of dignified and scriptural piety, which runs through every part of it. Euler was one of the most distinguished Philosophers and Mathematicians of his day. He died in 1783, at the age of 77. A new edition of this work, *with notes by Dr. Brewster*, has been lately published. These notes are excellent, so far as they extend; but it is to be regretted that they are so sparingly distributed, and that the passages suppressed by M. Condorcet, and De la Croix, which were restored by Dr. Hunter, who translated the work, and the notes of the French and English editors, are, for the most part, discarded. Notwithstanding the numercus excellent treatises which are to be found on this subject, a comprehensive work on experimental Philosophy, blended with sketches of those parts of natural history, which are connected with it, and enlivened with appropriate reflections on the peculiar agencies of the Deity, which appear in the various processes of nature—is still wanting to interest the general reader, and to attract his attention to this department of knowledge. Were philosophers in their discussions of natural science, more frequently to advert to the agency of the Deity, and to point out the Religious and Philanthropic purposes to which modern discoveries might be applied, they might be the means of promoting, at the same time, the interests both of science and of religion; by alluring general readers to direct their attention to such subjects; and by removing those groundless prejudices which a great proportion of the Christian world still entertain against philosophical studies. About the period when Boyle, Ray, Derham, Nieuwentyt, Whiston, Addison, the Abbe Pluche, and other Christian Philosophers flourished, more attention seems to have been paid to this object than at present. Since the middle of the last century, the piety of philosophers appears to have been greatly on the decline. It is to be hoped that it is now

beginning to experience a revival. But, whatever may be the varying sentiments and feelings of mere philosophers, in reference to the agencies of the material system—"all the works of God *invariably* speak of their Author," to the humble and enlightened Christian; and if he be directed to contemplate the order of nature, with an eye of intelligence, he will never be at a loss to trace the footsteps and the attributes of his Father and his God.

SELECT BOOKS ON CHEMISTRY.

Davy's Elements of Chemical Philosophy, 8vo.—Ure's Dictionary of Chemistry, on the basis of Mr. Nicholson's, one large vol. 8vo. Henry's Epitome of Chemistry, 2 vols. 8vo. —Accum's Chemistry, 2 vols. 8vo.—Thomson's system of Chemistry, 4 vols. 8vo.—Murray's System of Chemistry, 4 vols. 8vo. and Appendix.—Kerr's translation of Lavoisier's Elements of Chemistry, 8vo.—Chaptal's Chemistry, applied to the Arts, 4 vols. 8vo.—Fourcroy's Chemistry, 4 vols.— Accum's "Chemical Amusements," and Griffin's "Chemical Recreations," contain a description of a variety of interesting Chemical facts and amusing experiments.—Gurney's Lectures on the Elements of Chemical Science, 8vo.—Mackenzie's One Thousand Experiments in Chemistry, &c.—Mitchell's Dictionary of Chemistry.—Conversations on Chemistry, by a Lady, 2 vols. 12mo.—Joyce's Dialogues on Chemistry, 2 vols. 18mo.—Parker's Rudiments of Chemistry, 18mo. and his Chemical Catechism, 8vo.—The four works last mentioned may be recommended as popular introductions to the study of this science. Parkes' Rudiments and Catechism are distinguished by their constant reference to the agency of the Deity, and by the anxiety which the author displays to fix the attention of his readers on the evidences of benevolent design which appear in the constitution of nature. The numerous notes appended to the Chemical Catechism, embody a great variety of interesting facts in reference to the economy of nature, and the processes of the arts. To this amiable and intelligent writer I feel indebted for several of the chemical facts stated in this volume.

THE END.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Dec. 2004

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 013 652 565 7